宗像教授伝奇考

【第一集】

むなかたきょうじゅでんきこう

星野之宣

Hoshino Yukinobu

潮漫画文庫

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鉄あるところに白鳥あり——
昴を表す「七星剣」を手にした宗像教授が訪ねた出雲で、真っ赤に錆びた隕鉄を発見。人類最初の鉄器は宇宙からの鉄を利用したものと考察した教授は、鉄の神話、星の神話、白鳥伝説との関係性をひも解いていく…。
〈白き翼　鉄（くろがね）の星〉より

❖星野之宣❖

一九五四年一月二十九日、北海道帯広市に生まれる。愛知県立芸大中退。
一九七五年「鋼鉄のクイーン」でデビューし、同年「はるかなる朝」で手塚賞受賞。
以来、宇宙、海洋、伝奇、SF等、スケールの大きい本格派SF漫画家として活躍。
徹底した取材と科学的知識に基づく、卓抜なアイディア、壮大で緻密なストーリー、
繊細なペンタッチが多くの読者をひきつけている。
代表作に、「妖女伝説」「2001夜物語」「ヤマタイカ」「ブルーホール」
「未来の二つの顔」「メガクロス」「宗像教授伝奇考」など多数。

BOOK DESIGN❖TAKAHASHI JUNZI

既刊大好評発売中!!

❖星野之宣の本❖

◉希望コミックス
「宗像教授伝奇考」1〜6巻・特別版

◉潮漫画文庫
「ヤマタイカ」全5巻

THE LEGENDARY MUSINGS OF PROFESSOR MUNAKATA

VOLUME 1

HOSHINO YUKINOBU

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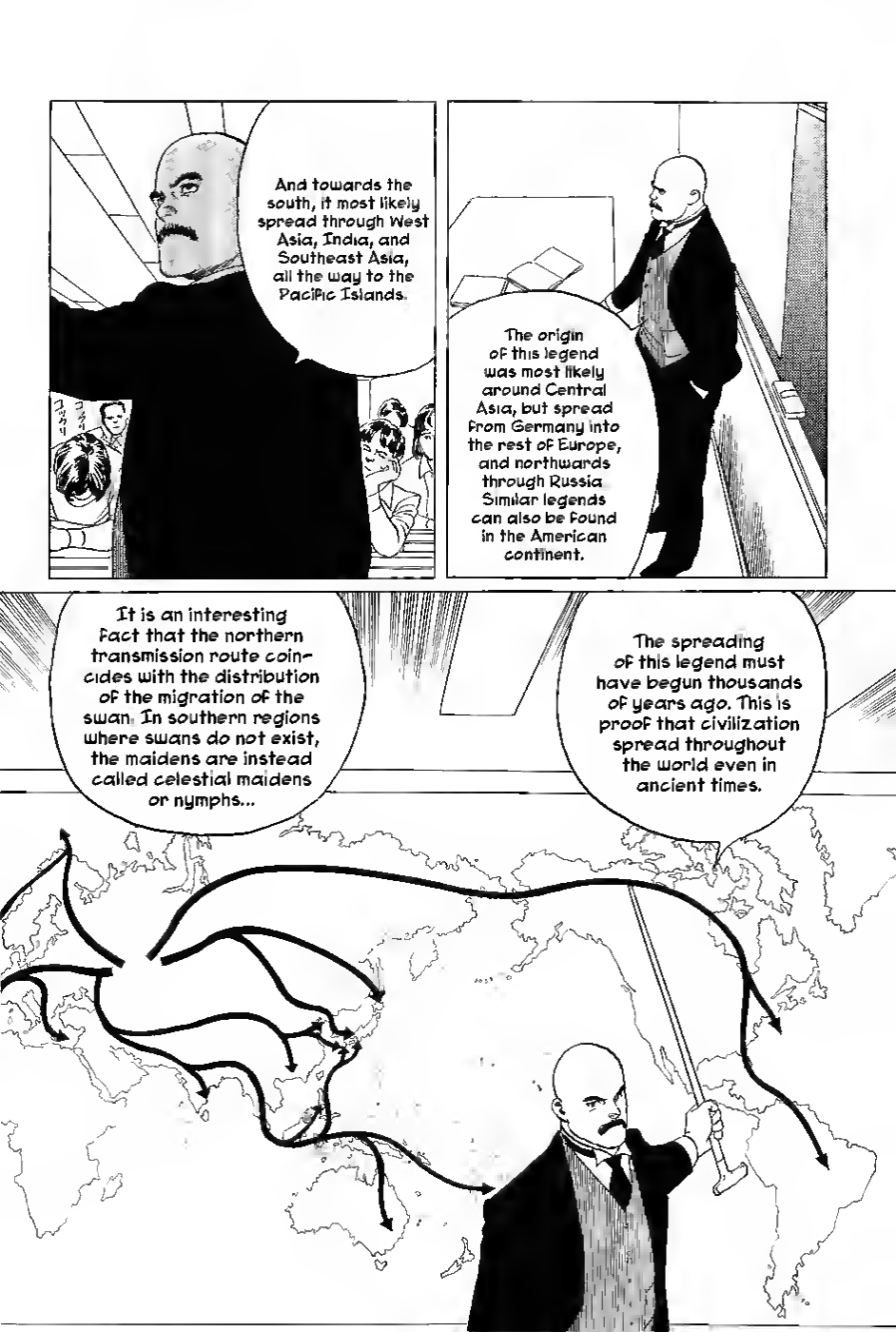
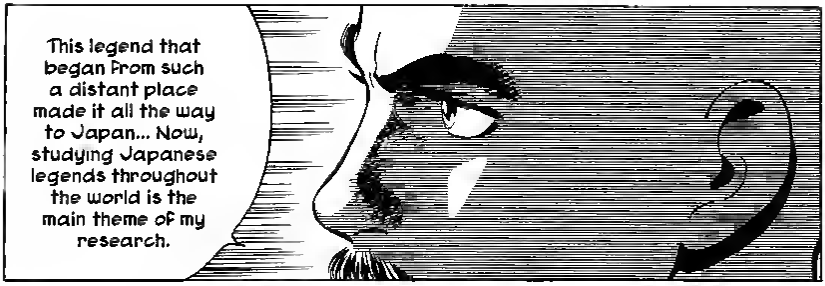
FILE 1: WINGS OF WHITE, STARS OF STEEL, PART 1

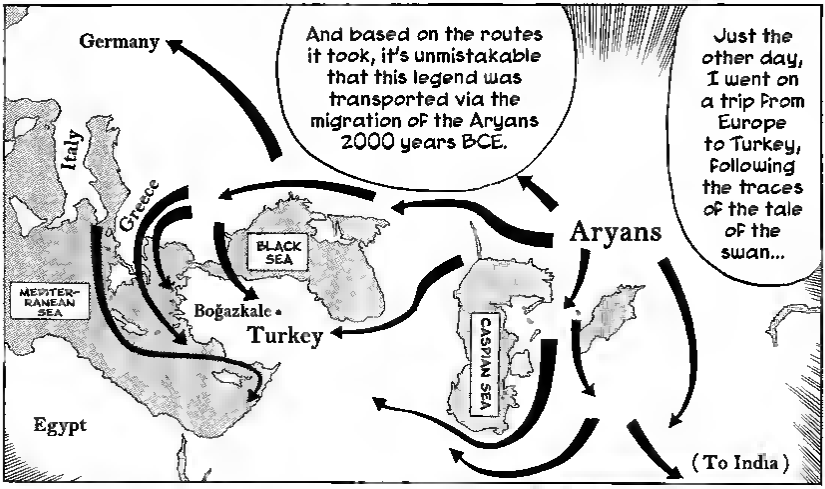
FILE 1:
WINGS OF WHITE, STARS OF STEEL, PART 1

There is a legend called the "Swan Maiden", which has a global span...
Seven swans descend upon a lake in the forest, remove their feathered cloaks, and transform into maidens to bathe,
when they are seen by a young hunter.
The hunter is overwhelmed by the maiden's beauty, and he hides one of their feathered garments. The maiden left behind, naked, has no choice but to marry the man, and lives out her life on the ground.

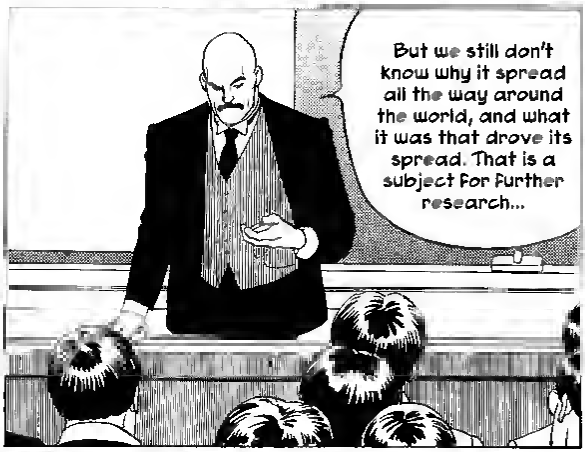

And towards the south, it most likely spread through West Asia, India, and Southeast Asia, all the way to the Pacific Islands.
The origin of this legend was most likely around Central Asia, but spread from Germany into the rest of Europe, and northwards through Russia. Similar legends can also be found in the American continent.
It is an interesting fact that the northern transmission route coincides with the distribution of the migration of the swan. In southern regions where swans do not exist, the maidens are instead called celestial maidens or nymphs...
The spreading of this legend must have begun thousands of years ago. This is proof that civilization spread throughout the world even in ancient times.

The most famous iteration of this legend is that a celestial maiden, descending from Heaven into a pine grove in Miho, Shizuoka, hangs her heavenly kimono on a pine branch, where it is hidden by a passing Fisherman. She has no choice but to marry the man, but she later retrieves her garment and returns to Heaven.
And in Japan, this legend is known as the "Heavenly Wife" or the "Legend of the Heavenly Kimono".
In Lake Yogo, Shiga, eight swans descended upon the lake, and remove their swans' skins, transforming into maidens, to bathe. The white dog of a man named Ikagotomi steals one of these swans' skins,
rendering one of the maidens unable to fly away, so she becomes Ikagotomi's wife. Eventually, she finds her swan skin and returns to Heaven...


This legend that began from such a distant place made it all the way to Japan... Now, studying Japanese legends throughout the world is the main theme of my research.

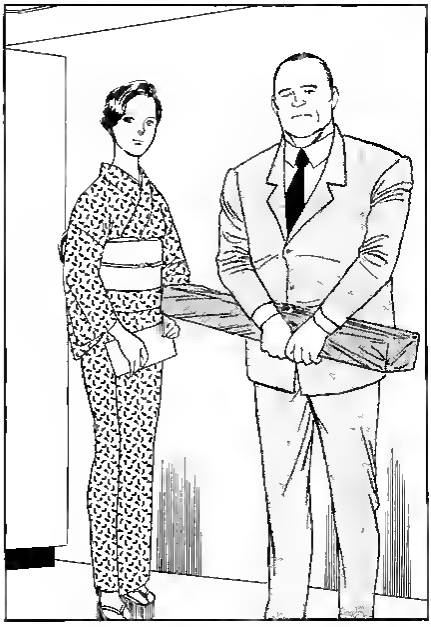

Germany
Italy
Greece
MEDITER-RANEAN SEA
BLACK SEA
Boğazkale
Turkey
Egypt
CASPIAN SEA
Aryans
(To India)
And based on the routes it took, it's unmistakable that this legend was transported via the migration of the Aryans 2000 years BCE.
Just the other day, I went on a trip from Europe to Turkey, following the traces of the tale of the swan...

YAAAAAAN

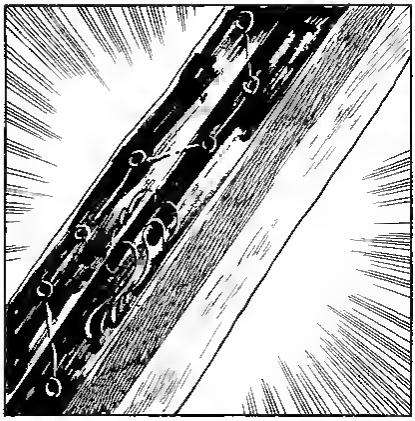

But we still don't know why it spread all the way around the world, and what it was that drove its spread. That is a subject for further research...

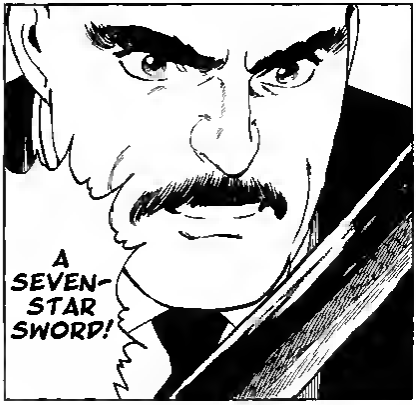
You're a really unusual student. Not many students can listen to my lectures without growing bored.
My name's Ikago Mana. I'm in your Folkloristics class.

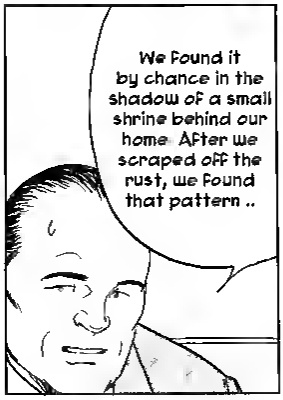
SIGN: EAST ASIA UNIVERSITY OF CULTURE

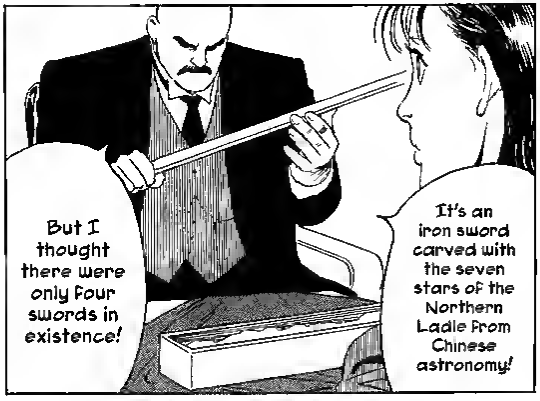


Oh, you're from Izumo?
Tokyo really has changed a lot. It's nothing but tall buildings now...
Ah.
We live deep in the mountains of Shimane. My daughter told me you could help us...
L...Let's get right to the point. I wanted to show this to you.
Ahem!
Have you been to Tokyo before, ma'am?
No!

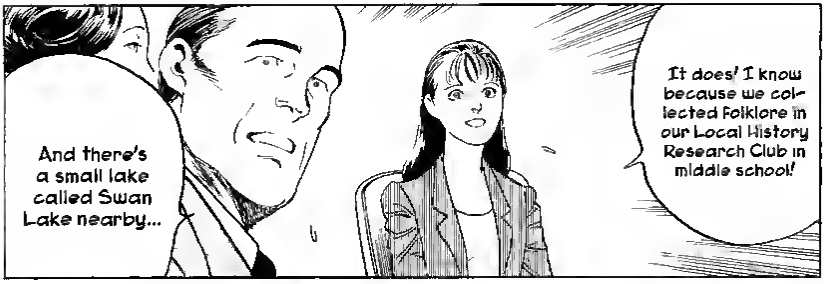



A SEVEN-STAR SWORD!

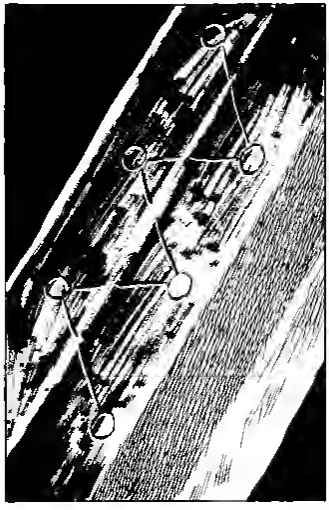

We found it by chance in the shadow of a small shrine behind our home. After we scraped off the rust, we found that pattern ..


But I thought there were only four swords in existence!
It's an iron sword carved with the seven stars of the Northern Ladle from Chinese astronomy!

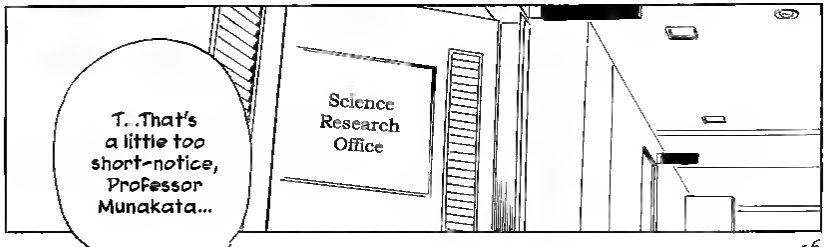
A small shrine? ...Hmm!?
KA!
They're connected in a zig-zag! This is Mǎo Xiù...
SU-BARU!
That's strange! These six stars on the back of the sword are supposed to be the Chinese constellation representing the Three Steps of the Supreme Palace Enclosure, but they are connected wrong!
Izumo is one of the lands where the Heavenly Kimono legend was transmitted! Does your village have a legend of the Heavenly Kimono or the Swan?
Subaru ?


And there's a small lake called Swan Lake nearby...
It does! I know because we collected folklore in our Local History Research Club in middle school!

Swan Lake... Hmm, this is amusing...

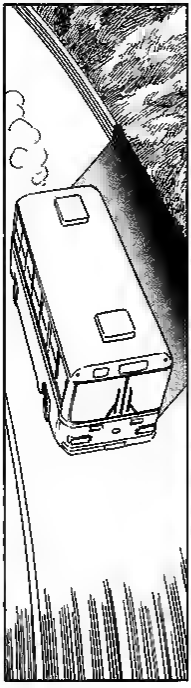


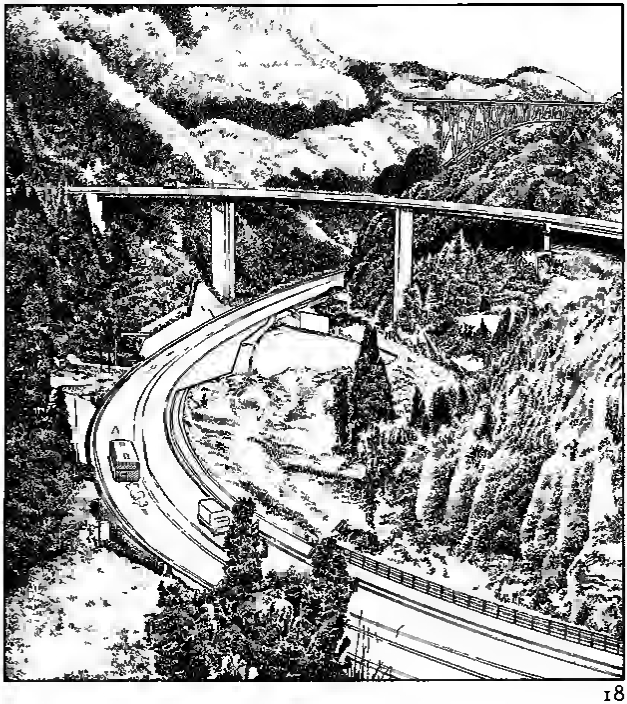
Would it be alright if I accompanied you home?
I'll go too and guide you!
Y... Yes, of course.

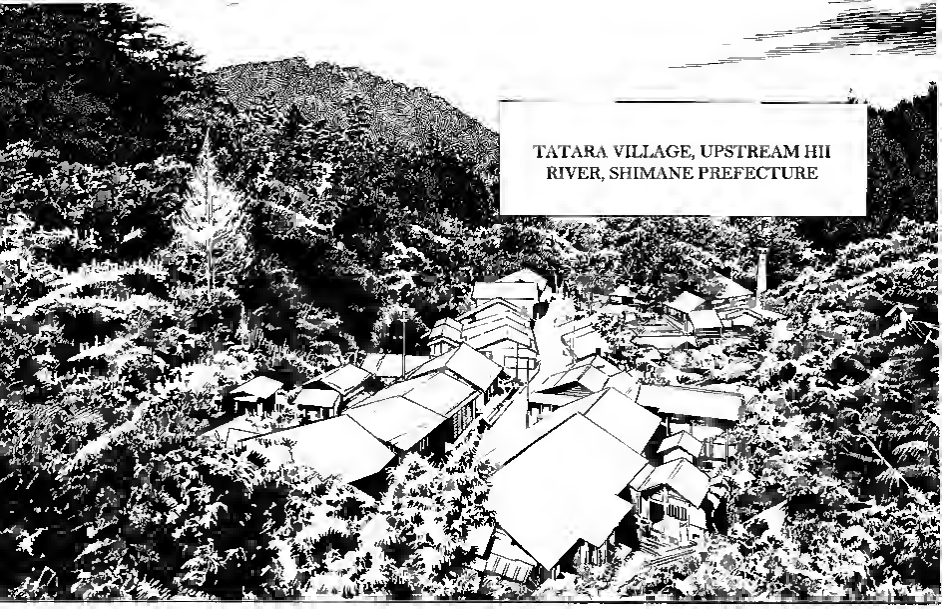

T...That's a little too short-notice, Professor Munakata...
Science Research Office

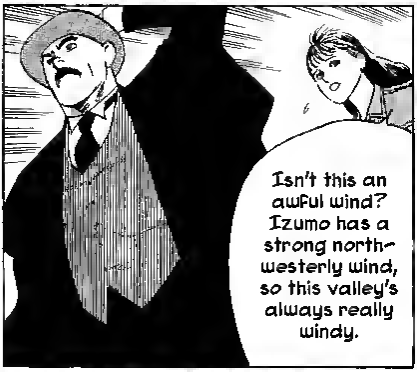
Are you turning me down?
You're a specialist in iron analysis, right? My hypothesis is that this was made from iron sand, but I want you to designate its origin based on its composition.
You say that like it's so simple! We've got a mountain of samples waiting on analysis!
YOU'RE ALWAYS BRINGING IN THE MOST DIFFICULT SAMPLES! TRY TO PUT YOURSELF IN MY SHOES!

IZUMO
SHIMANE PREFECTURE
HII RIVER

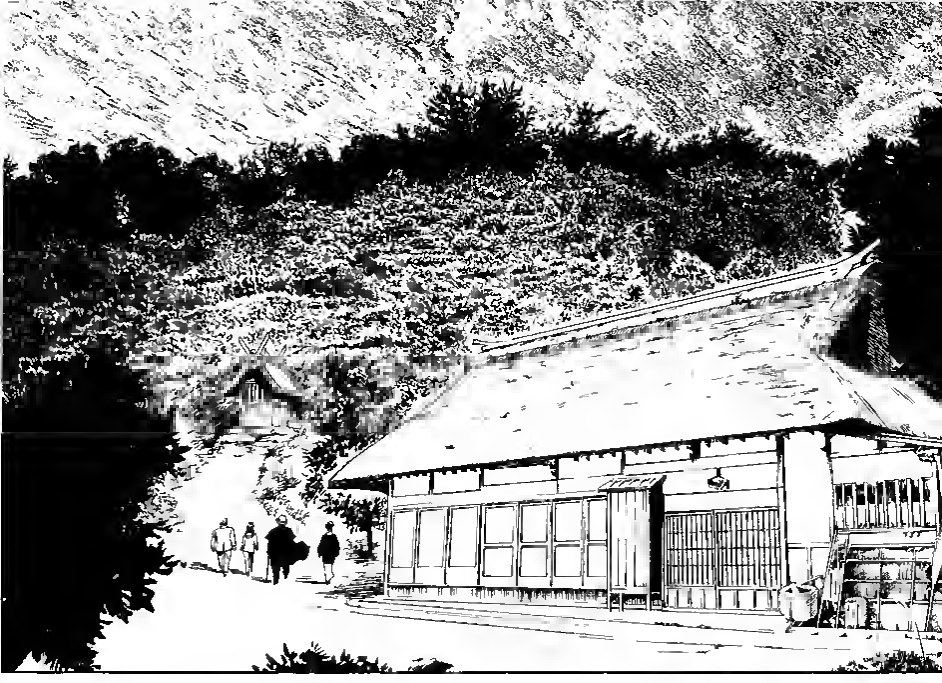




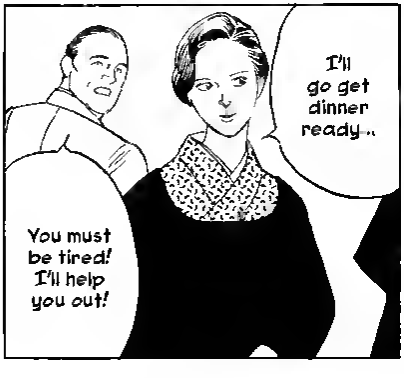

TATARA VILLAGE, UPSTREAM HII RIVER, SHIMANE PREFECTURE

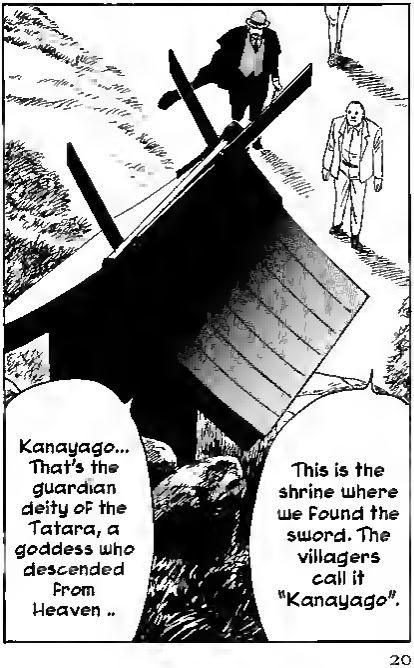

Isn't this an awful wind? Izumo has a strong northwesterly wind, so this valley's always really windy.

They seem to have migrated from mountain to mountain in search of iron long ago.
I've heard that "Tatara" refers to people who make iron out of iron sand.



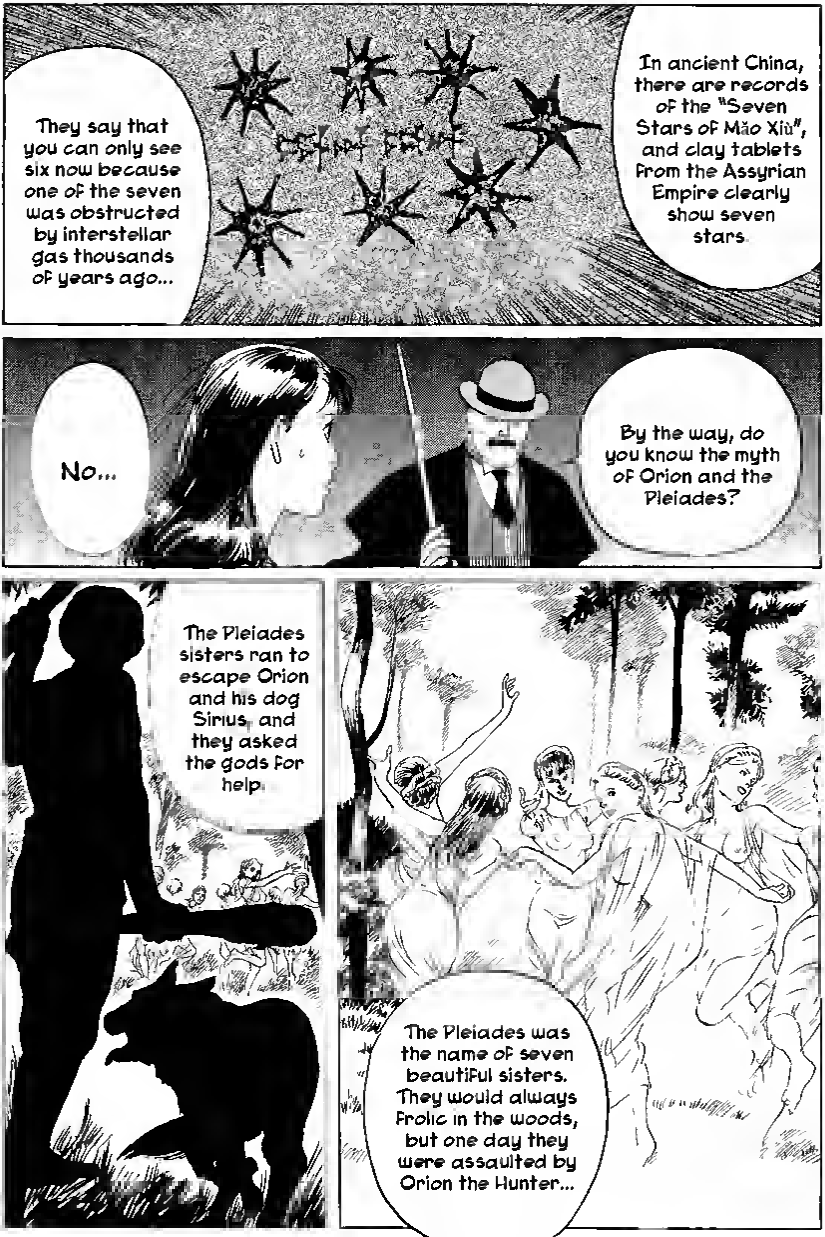
Swan Lake is just behind it, but it'll be dark out soon. I'll show you there tomorrow.


I'll go get dinner ready..
You must be tired! I'll help you out!


Kanayago... That's the guardian deity of the Tatara, a goddess who descended from Heaven..
This is the shrine where we found the sword. The villagers call it "Kanayago".

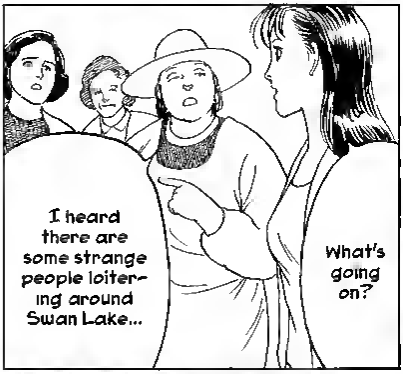
Don't mention it!
Sorry for imposing on you without warning.
Your father seems very kind, and your mother is quite elegant and beautiful.
Hahaha! Well, she does seem a little other-worldly ...
My mother is a little strange, isn't she? The villagers are always making fun of her, and call her a Celestial Maiden.
Well, this truly is beautiful.
I hear she came from a distant land, but she won't tell anybody about her past. Not even to my father. Isn't that strange?

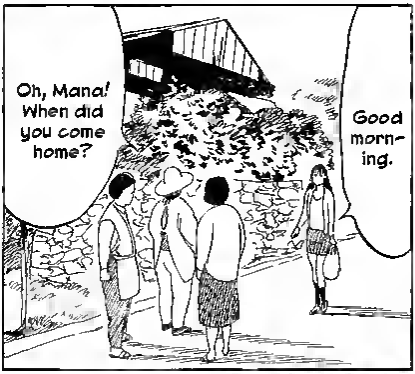
Huh?
...Yeah.
So that's "Subaru" ...
Did you know, Mana? That quadrilateral with three stars in the center is Orion. Just above it is Taurus, and the cluster of small stars is "Subaru".
But strangely enough, the ancients seemed to have seen seven.
Astronomers call them the Pleiades, after the Greek myth, but in Japan they are known as "Subaru" or the "Six Stars", because there are six stars that can be seen with the naked eye.


They say that you can only see six now because one of the seven was obstructed by interstellar gas thousands of years ago...
In ancient China, there are records of the "Seven Stars of Mǎo Xiù", and clay tablets from the Assyrian Empire clearly show seven stars.
No...
By the way, do you know the myth of Orion and the Pleiades?
The Pleiades sisters ran to escape Orion and his dog Sirius, and they asked the gods for help.
The Pleiades was the name of seven beautiful sisters. They would always frolic in the woods, but one day they were assaulted by Orion the Hunter...

The gods turned the sisters into doves, and let them escape to the sky. Then they rose up to Heaven and became the seven stars.
Well? Do you see why I am interested in the "Subaru", or the Pleiades, on the Seven-Star Sword?
And Orion is still circling the sky, pursuing the six remaining sisters...
IT'S JUST LIKE THE MYTH OF THE SWAN MAIDEN!
After that, the seven stars became six. They say that one of the sisters fell in love with a human and hid herself, or became a comet and left the sky.

It is possible that this myth was a product of the myth of the Swan Maiden coming to Greece... However...
Precisely!
Seven maidens are turned into birds, a hunter suddenly appears, and one of the maiden is separated from the others...
The myth of the Pleiades is based in an actual astronomical phenomenon.
So the converse is more likely .. that this was the prototype!
THE ANCIENT ORIGIN OF THE SWAN MYTH AND THE HEAVENLY KIMONO MYTH WAS IN AN ASTRONOMICAL MYTH... THAT'S MY HYPOTHESIS!


I heard there are some strange people loitering around Swan Lake...
What's going on?


Oh, Mana! When did you come home?
Good morning.

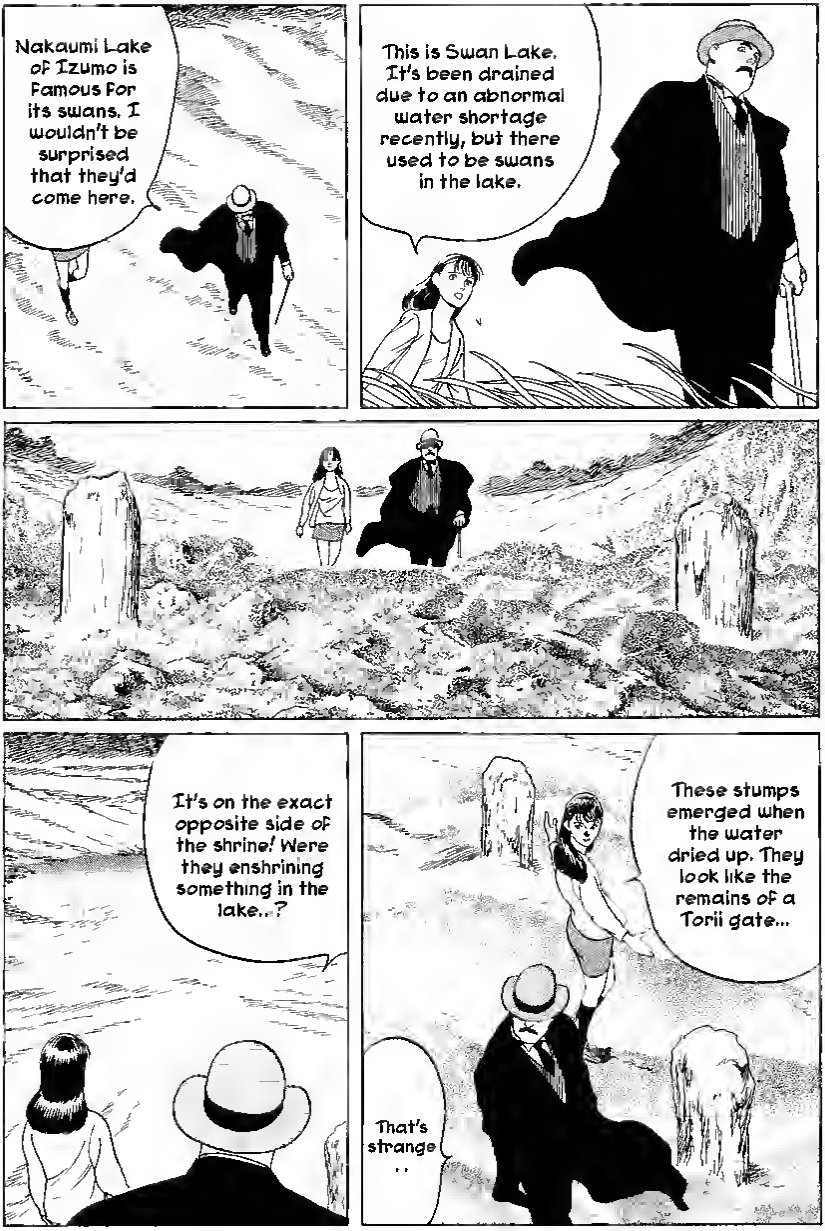
The sword was wedged in the space between these stones...
Hmm... Do you mind if I move this stone a little?

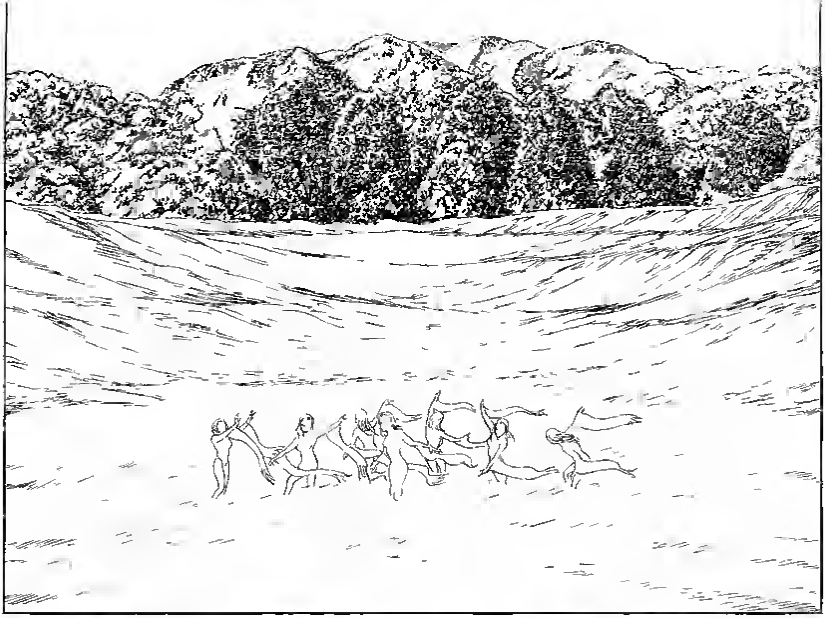
Strange people?

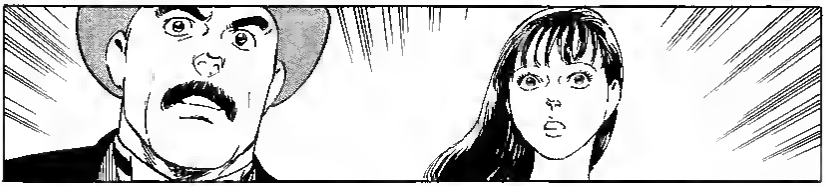
Then you'll need a tool of some sort.
I used to go duck hunting... But this hasn't been used in twenty years. It's all rusted.
Yeah...
Are you a hunter ?

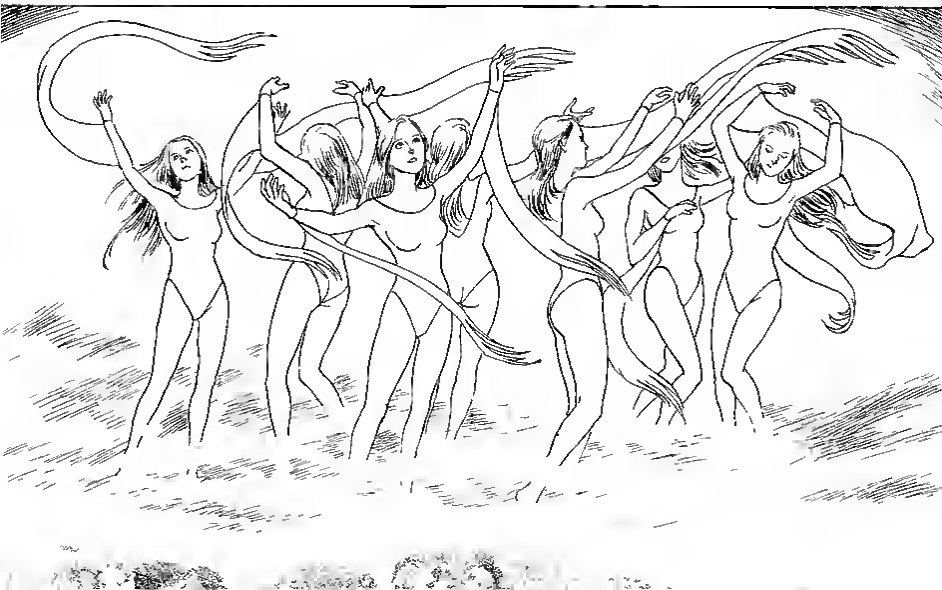
S... SORRY! TAEKO ...
I'll look after your mother. Mana, you go guide Professor Munakata ...
Y... Yes.
I'll throw that blasted thing away! Just lie down and get some rest...
Mother!
ヒィィィィ
ゴロ〃

Hmm... What's on the other side...?


Nakaumi Lake of Izumo is famous for its swans. I wouldn't be surprised that they'd come here.
This is Swan Lake. It's been drained due to an abnormal water shortage recently, but there used to be swans in the lake.
It's on the exact opposite side of the shrine! Were they enshrining something in the lake...?
These stumps emerged when the water dried up. They look like the remains of a Torii gate...
That's strange...

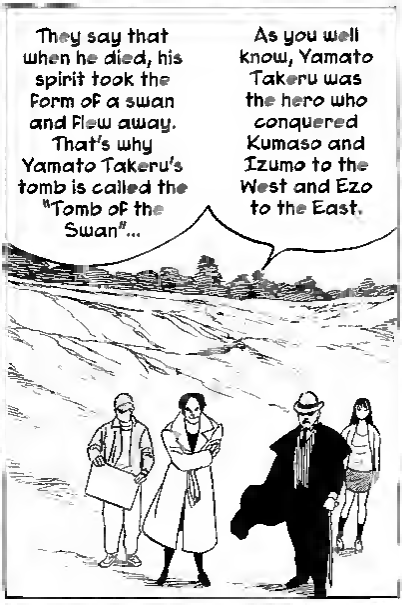




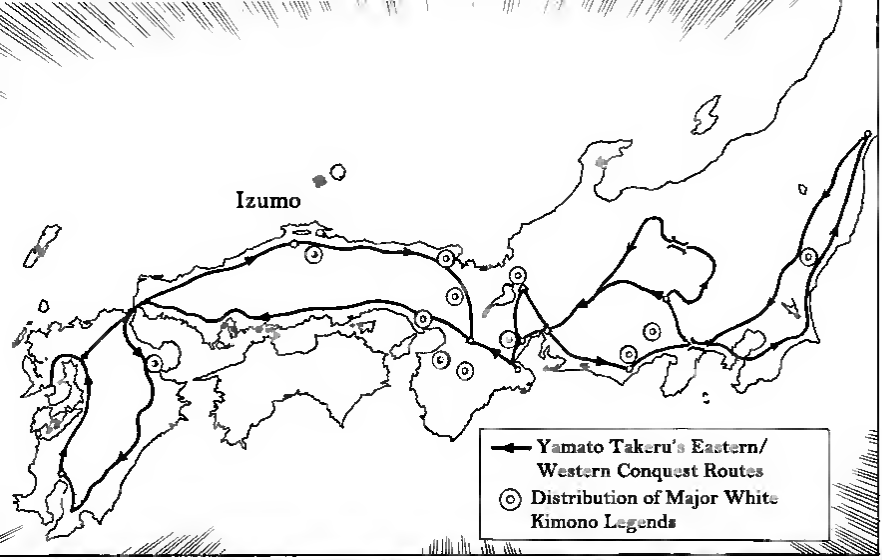


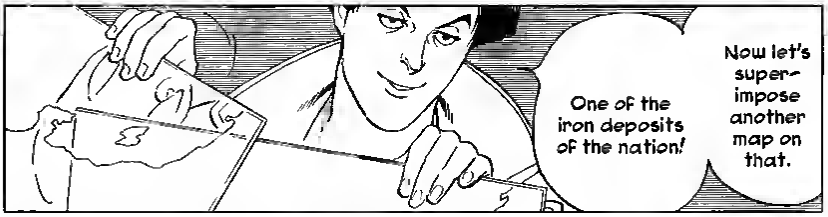
I need more smoke! We need a fantastical image of the swan nymphs!
What's going on here?
Pardon me. Aren't you Professor Munakata?
You dress just like the rumors say.
Pleased to meet you. I'm Imibe Shoichiro.

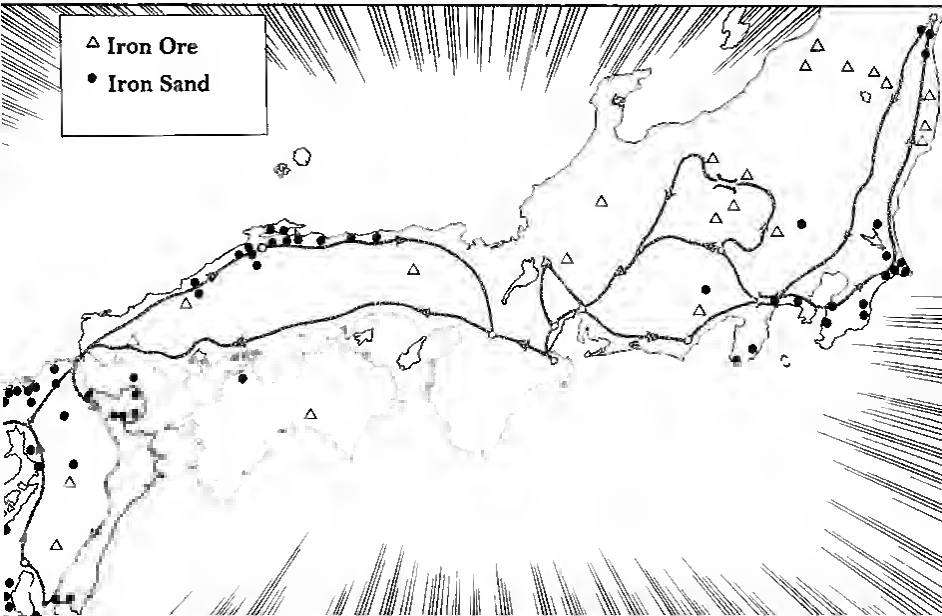
Oh, my, what a greeting! You could at least call me your professional rival!
Imibe... I've seen you on TV before. You're a historian known for his garish hypotheses.
How does the title "Yamato Takeru, the Ancient Hero"...
Yes, I suppose.
Don't compare yourself with me! Are you shooting another of your historical specials?
Swans and Steel?
"The Path of Swans and Steel" sound to you?

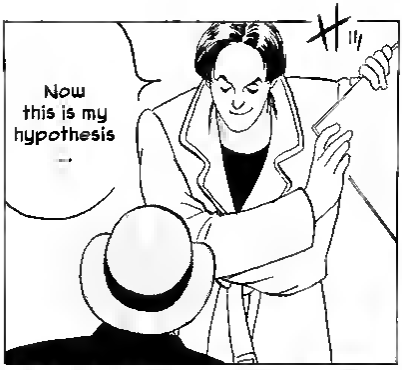

As you well know, Yamato Takeru was the hero who conquered Kumaso and Izumo to the West and Ezo to the East.
They say that when he died, his spirit took the form of a swan and flew away. That's why Yamato Takeru's tomb is called the "Tomb of the Swan"...

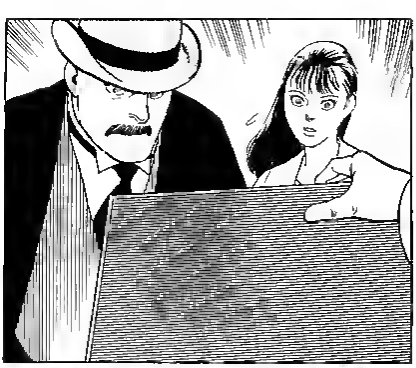
We're going to be using this for our program. Here's the correlation between Yamato Takeru's Eastern and Western conquest routes and the White Kimono Legends that remain in Japan...


Izumo
Yamato Takeru's Eastern/ Western Conquest Routes
Distribution of Major White Kimono Legends

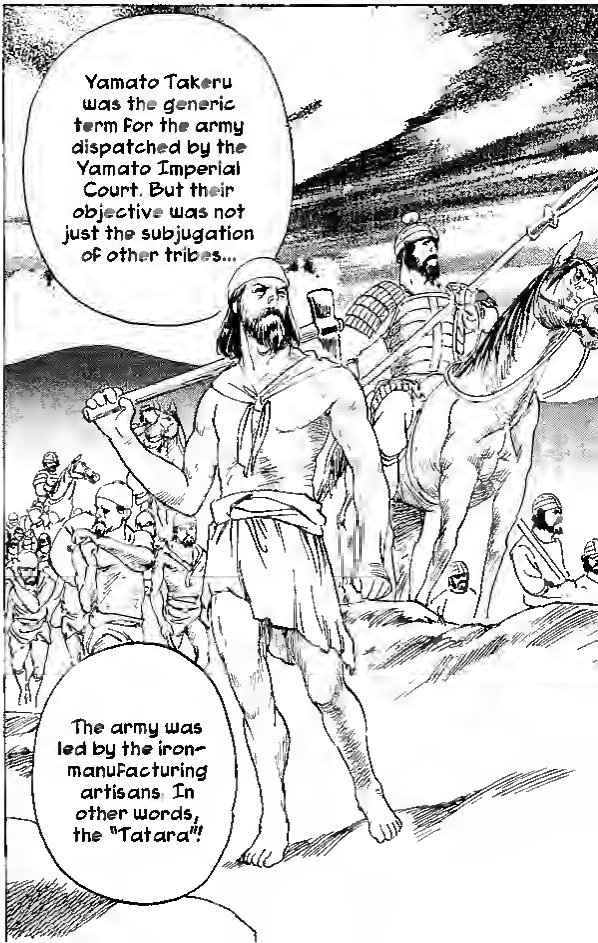

One of the iron deposits of the nation!
Now let's superimpose another map on that.


Iron Ore
Iron Sand


Now this is my hypothesis —



And the guardian deity of this migratory group was the swan...


Yamato Takeru was the generic term for the army dispatched by the Yamato Imperial Court. But their objective was not just the subjugation of other tribes...
The army was led by the iron-manufacturing artisans. In other words, the "Tatara"!

In ancient times, iron was replacing bronze as the most crucial resource for creating powerful weapons.
The army was ordered by the court to find iron deposits, and thus coursed the Japanese archipelago t the East and the West.
Izumo, which was where Okuninushi yielded the land to the gods, produces the most suitable iron sand for forging swords along the banks of the Hii River.
Susano'o also defeated the Yamata-no-Orochi and obtained the divine sword Kusanagi-no-Tsurugi on the Hii River.
And Yamato Takeru, wielding the Kusanagi-no-Tsurugi, also slew Izumo Takeru along the Hii River and conquered Izumo... All of these myths represent the historical conquest of the iron-rich land called Izumo.

And, based on that grand hypothesis, our reporters have come here, upstream on the Hii River, taking the seven swan nymphs with us...
AIIEEEE!!
Still, this is quite the coincidence, Professor Munakata. What are you doing here...?
It hurts ...
OUCH...

It's a hole! Looks like it's been clogged up with rotten driftwood. It's completely dry, though!
That's not just drift-wood...
Looks like it's sprained! And we still have to do our shoot in Kyushu!
What a shame. We're down from seven maidens to six...
That looks like the remains of the Torii gate...
But how'd it drift all the way here...?

What do you think of his hypothesis, Professor?
It doesn't seem like it's entirely baseless. He'd probably be dancing the Can-can if he knew about the Seven-Star Sword.
Iron... Come to think of it, they say that iron-age civilization came into Japan in 400 BCE, even before the Yayoi period.
And I estimated that the myth of the Swan Maiden came here at about the same time.
What's this? It looks really rusted..

Pro-
fessor
?
I...
I
SEE...
I
SEE!
THAT
MIGHT
JUST
BE IT!

AHHHHHHH!

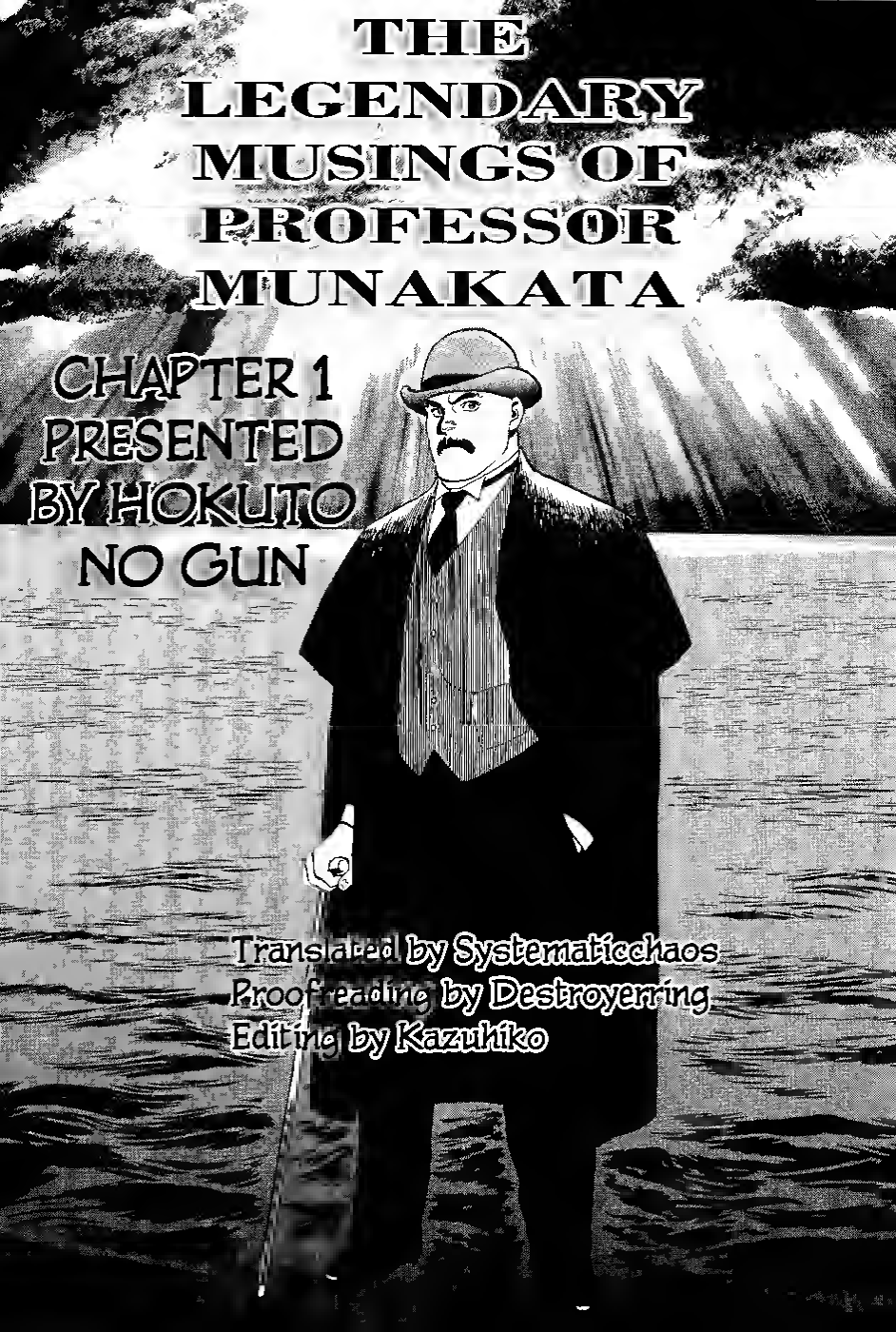
PARDON ME! I NEED TO USE YOUR PHONE!
GET ME THE SCIENCE RESEARCH OFFICE!

We haven't gotten around to analyzing the sword. We need more...
HUUUUUH !?
I'VE GOT ONE MORE THING THAT NEEDS ANALYZING! SO STOP COMPLAINING AND GET OVER HERE!
YOU WANT ME IN IZUMO BY TOMOR-ROW!?
It's connected... It's all connected ....!!
カチャ

THE LEGENDARY MUSINGS OF PROFESSOR MUNAKATA

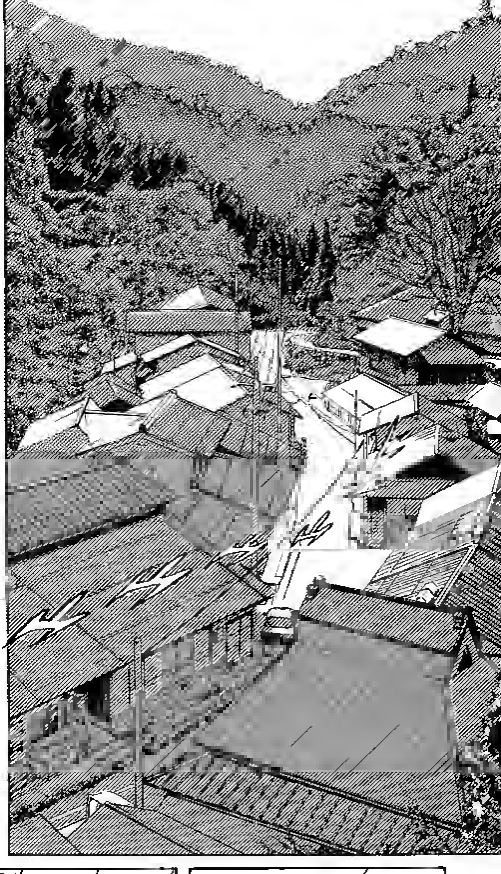
CHAPTER 1

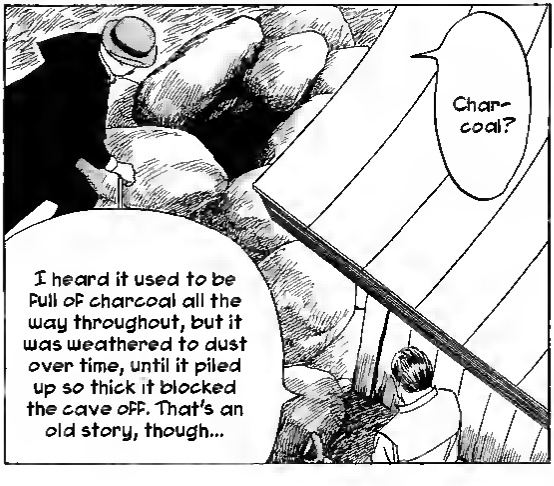
PRESENTED BY HOKUTO NO GUN



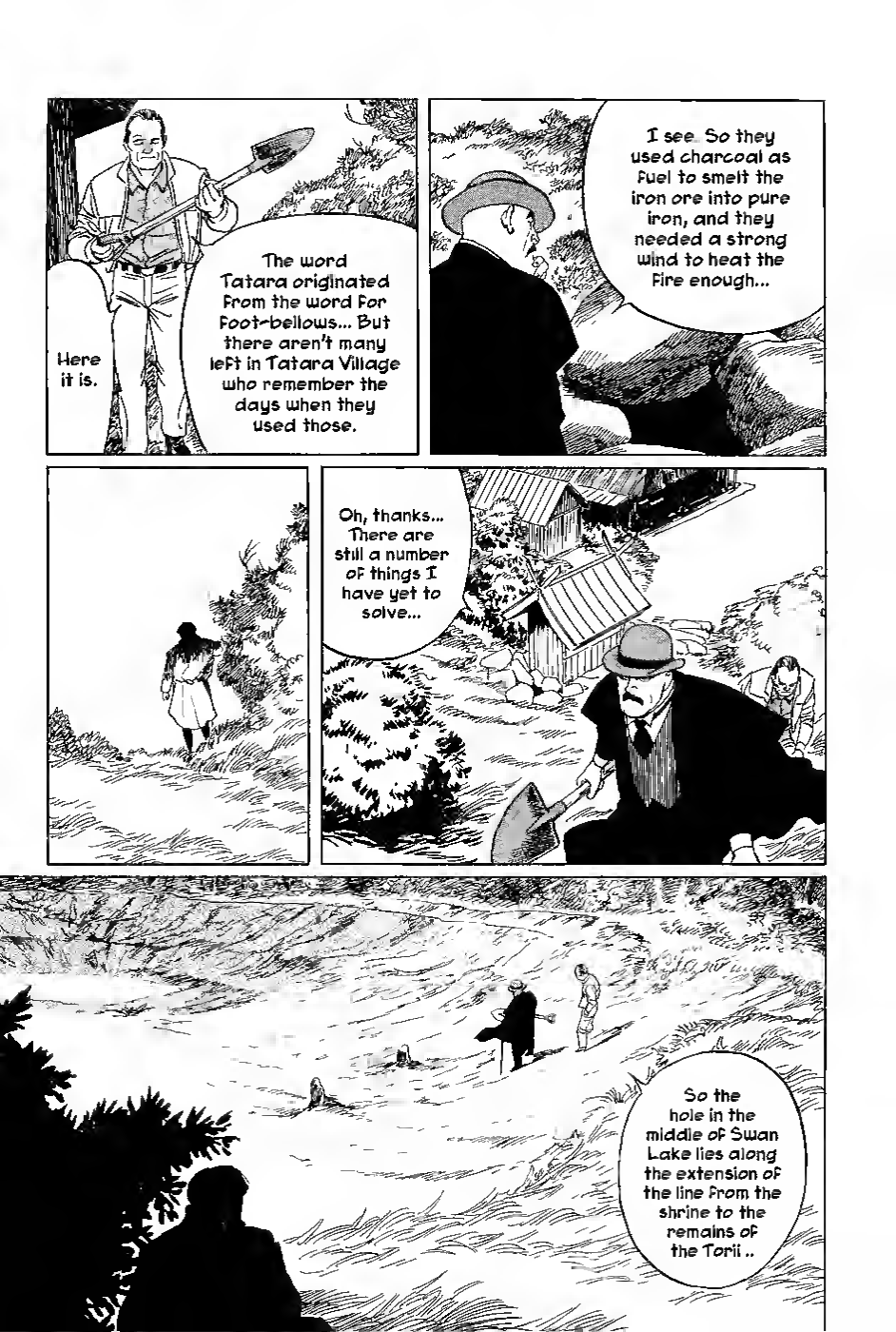
Translated by Systematicchaos
Proofreading by Destroyerring
Editing by Kazuhiko

FILE 2: WINGS OF WHITE, STARS OF STEEL, PART 2




Char-coal?
I heard it used to be full of charcoal all the way throughout, but it was weathered to dust over time, until it piled up so thick it blocked the cave off. That's an old story, though...

Huh? Oh...
They say that this hole was a storehouse for charcoal used by the "Tatara".


Here it is.
The word Tatara originated from the word for foot-bellows... But there aren't many left in Tatara Village who remember the days when they used those.
I see. So they used charcoal as fuel to smelt the iron ore into pure iron, and they needed a strong wind to heat the fire enough...
Oh, thanks... There are still a number of things I have yet to solve...
So the hole in the middle of Swan Lake lies along the extension of the line from the shrine to the remains of the Torii ..

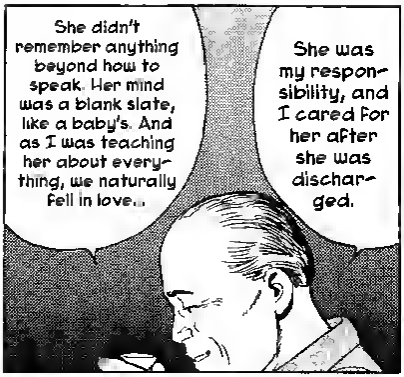
I gotta say, I never expected a university professor to perform his own manual labor...
Hehen... Well, I can't let myself be outdone by some flabby youngsters!
It's covered in earth and sand, but it looks like someone dug this hole
And if the driftwood gathered here, that must mean that it's been draining the lake water little by little...

...Wind?
Pro-
fessor
!?
It looks like the hollow keeps going down, but this rotten wood is keeping me from going any further... Hmm?
It's charcoal! Powdered charcoal!

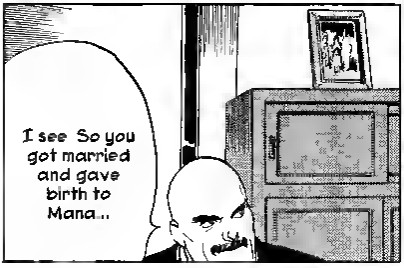
Do you think Professor Munakata would like sukiyaki made with Shimane beef, Mother ..?
ボオオ
Mother?
ボオオ

No, I'm a teetotaler.
Oh, don't be like that... Did you find something to further your research...?
My wife and daughter are taking a while to come back from shopping. Why don't we have a drink while we wait, Professor ...?
If my conjecture is correct, that Seven-Star Sword was made from a "star" itself...
...I did.
TAEKO!
I...It's nothing. I'm just a little dizzy...
A...A star!?

I'll watch over her this time. Father, you can keep the Professor company
Oh... Sure.
I'll bet you think she's a rather peculiar woman..
Oh, no..
But that's only natural...
She's suffered from amnesia.
AMNESIA!?

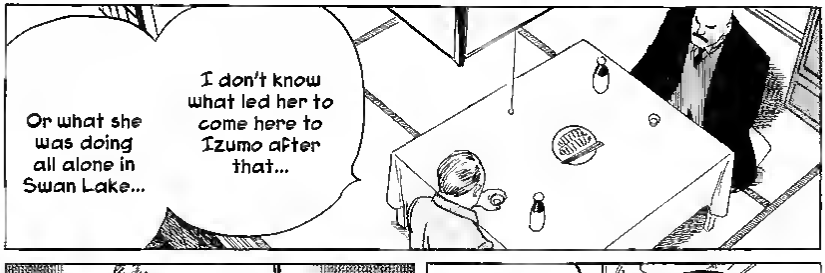

She didn't remember anything beyond how to speak. Her mind was a blank slate, like a baby's. And as I was teaching her about everything, we naturally fell in love...
She was my responsibility, and I cared for her after she was discharged.

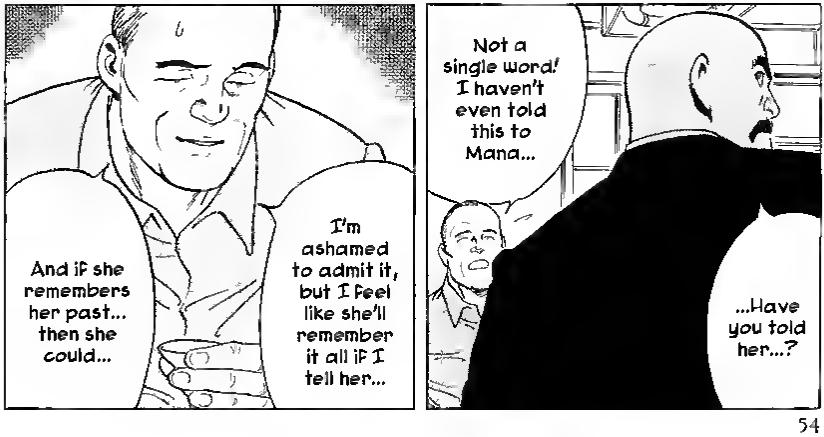
...Twenty years ago, my buckshot accidentally hit the head of an unidentifiable woman... And that was Taeko.

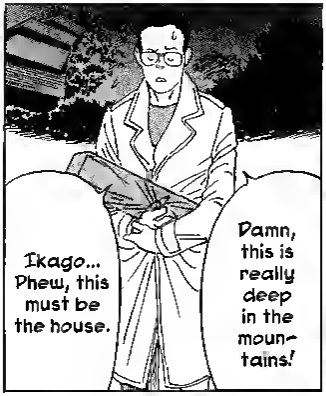

I see. So you got married and gave birth to Mana...

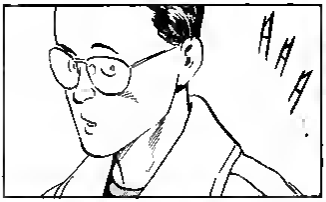
But I learned about Taeko's past through the occasional newspaper article...

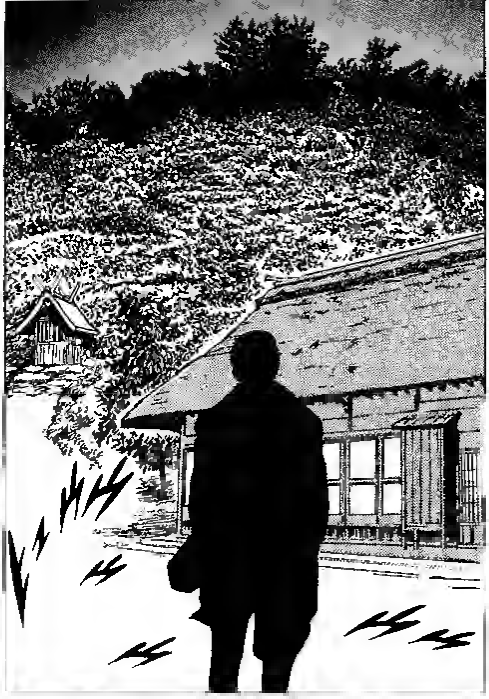
They were a happy family living in the suburbs of Tokyo, but she lost everything in a sudden fire...
SHO! HONEY!!


I don't know what led her to come here to Izumo after that...
Or what she was doing all alone in Swan Lake...

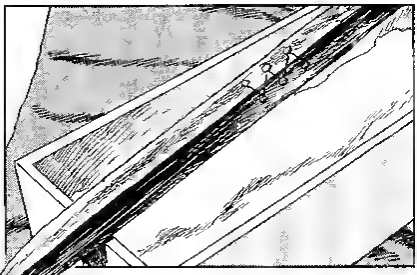

Not a single word! I haven't even told this to Mana...
...Have you told her...?
I'm ashamed to admit it, but I feel like she'll remember it all if I tell her...
And if she remembers her past... then she could...

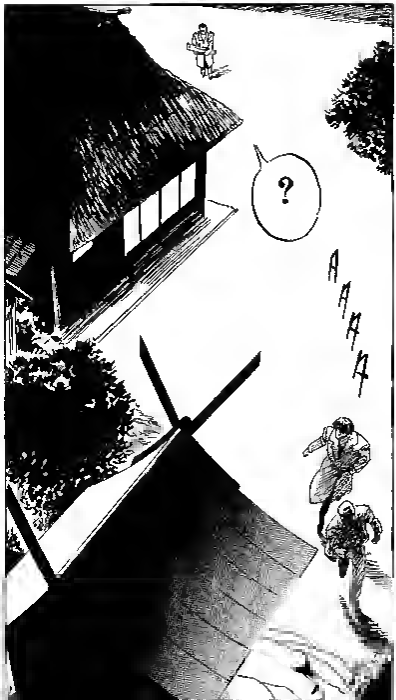

Damn, this is really deep in the mountains!
Ikago... Phew, this must be the house.


AHH!



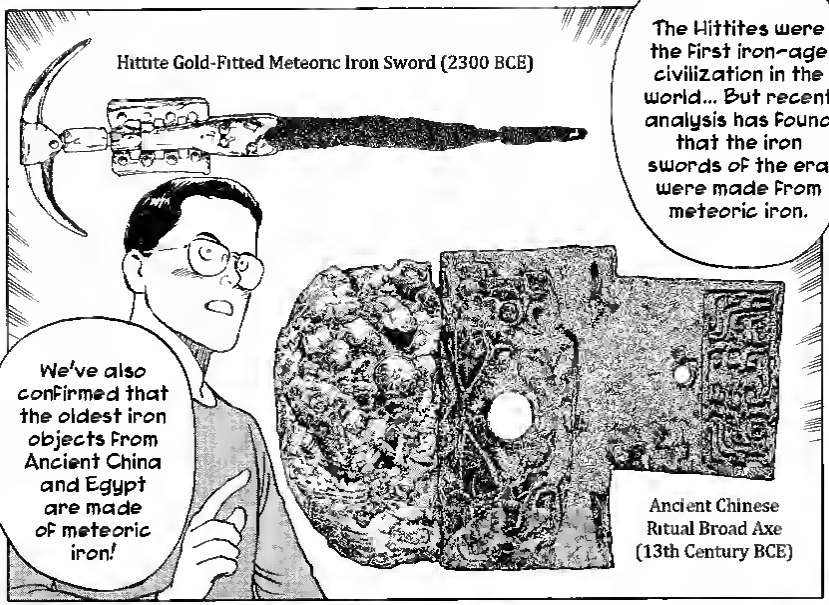
Oh, you're here early! Come on in!




?
AAAA

Oh... Thanks.
Here you go.
I've completed the sword's analysis!
Oh, good work! Mana, pour him a drink, will you?
Okay!
Was it meteoric iron?
Y... YOU KNEW !?
I guessed it when I saw this today.

What's this "meteoric iron"?
W... Well, it's...!
It's also known as an "iron meteor"! A lump of iron that's fallen from space.
This is probably meteoric iron as well... You could easily make an iron sword with these lying around.
Are you alright, Taeko?
Yes, I'm alright. Really...
It was near the ruins of the ancient Hittite empire.
As I was touring the ruins in Turkey, I was taken to a rufous crater and saw a fragment similar to this one.


Hittite Gold-Fitted Meteoric Iron Sword (2300 BCE)
The Hittites were the first iron-age civilization in the world... But recent analysis has found that the iron swords of the era were made from meteoric iron.
We've also confirmed that the oldest iron objects from Ancient China and Egypt are made of meteoric iron!
Ancient Chinese Ritual Broad Axe (13th Century BCE)

THIS MEANS THERE'S A STRONG POSSIBILITY THAT HUMANITY'S FIRST IRON TOOLS USED IRON FROM SPACE!

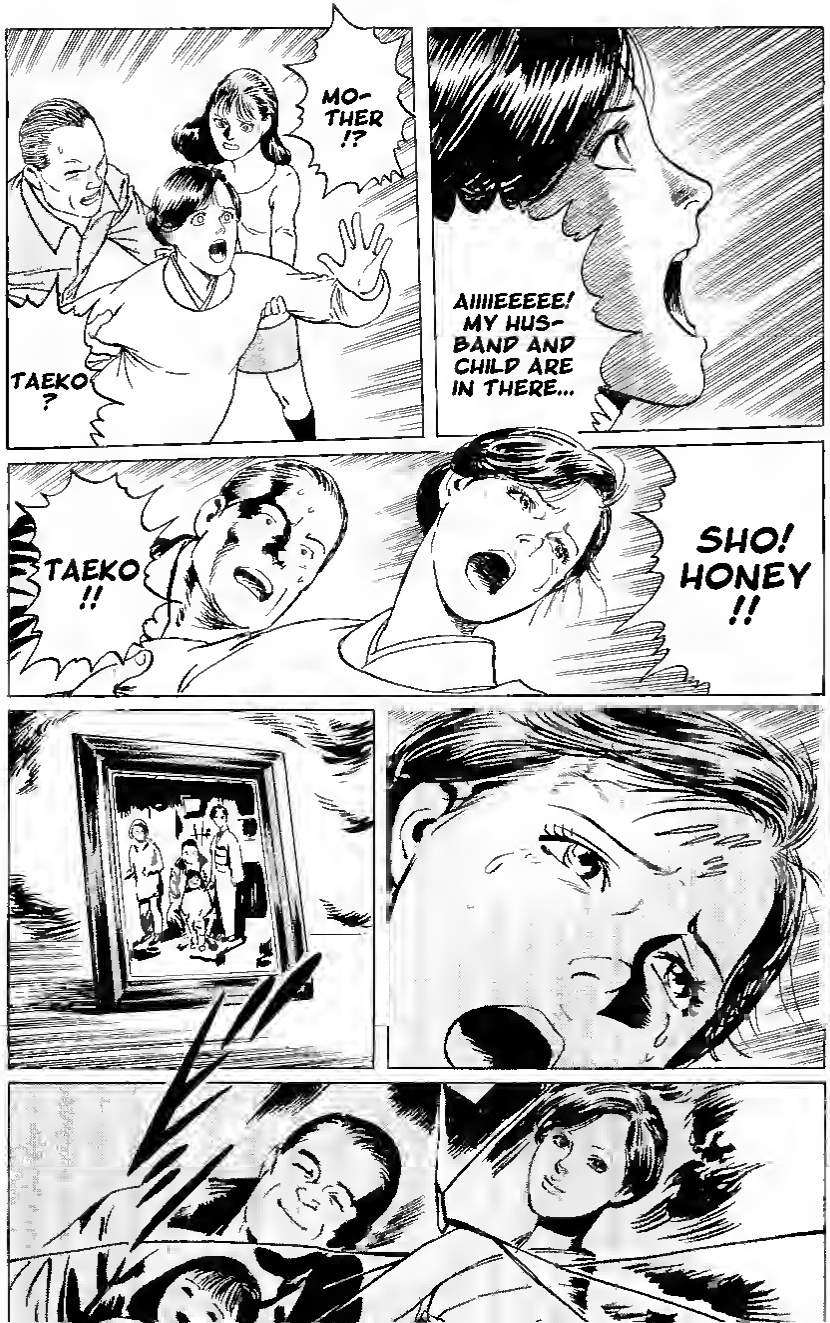
I thought I smelled something fishy, so I asked around the village, and they tell me that an iron sword came from here! That Munakata was keeping it from us!
Aren't you my assistant? This should be a piece of cake for you!
Y...You want me to go in here?
You've got a lighter, don't you? Oh, wait!
It's pitch-black...
An iron sword of Izumo, just like the myths say... It's mine! If there's anything else in the depths of this cave, we'll take a camera crew down there first thing in the morning!

WAUGH! THE WIND... PFFT! PFFT!
It's pitch-black down here! And there seems to be some kind of black dust...
110
110
110

GYAAEEEEEEEEEEEE!!!
WHAT'S GOING ON!?

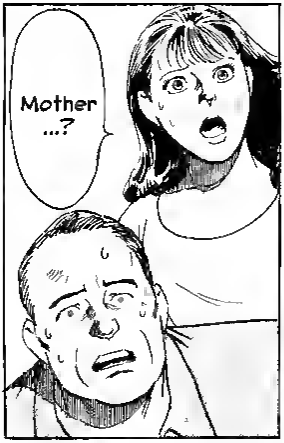
OH, NO! THE SHRINE! MANA, GET SOME WATER! N...NO, THE WIND'S TOO STRONG! CALL THE FIRE DEPARTMENT!!
O... OKAY!
IMIBE! WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE!?
T...THE LIGHTER ...
YOU FOOL! THAT CAVE IS FILLED WITH POWDERED CHARCOAL! IT'LL CATCH FIRE EXPLOSIVELY... HUH!?
WATCH OUT! THERE ARE SPARKS FLYING EVERYWHERE!!

MOTHER, GET OUT! THERE'S A FIRE!!

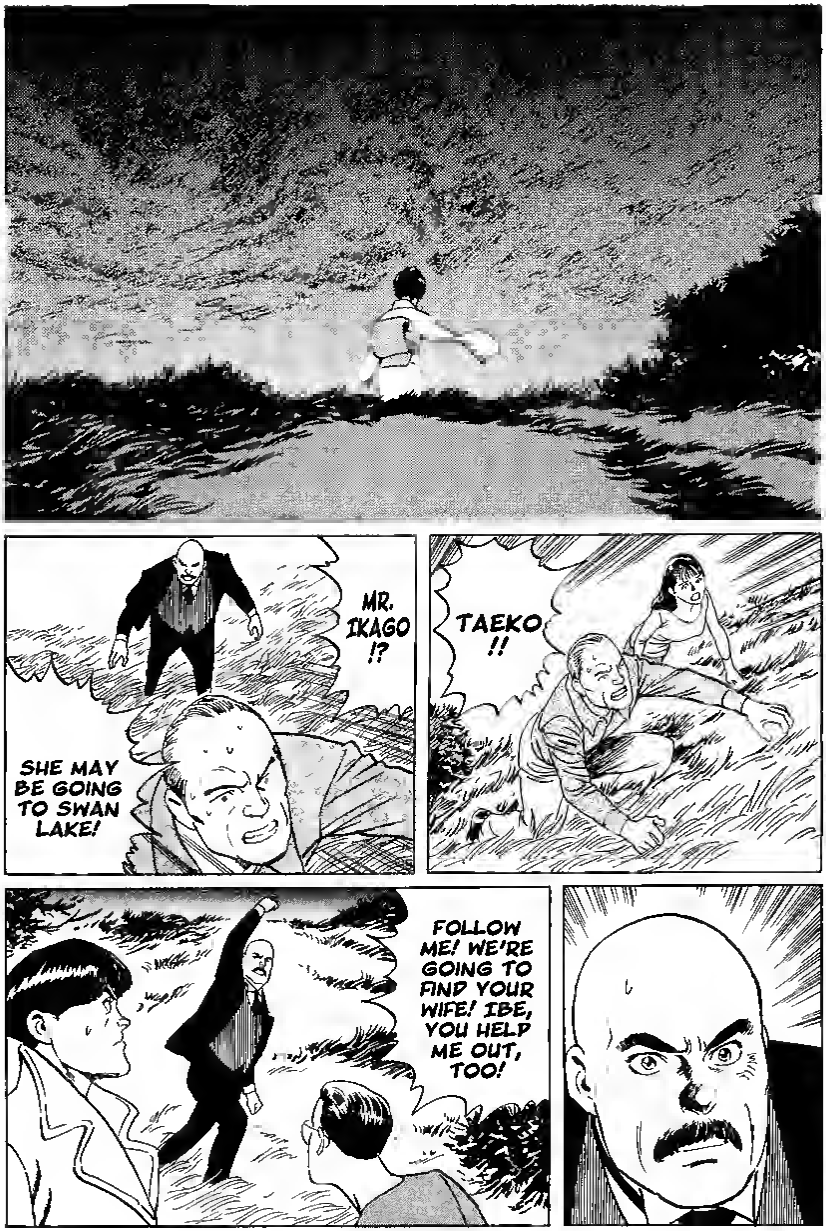

MO-
THER
!?
TAEKO
?
AIIIIEEEEEE!
MY HUS-
BAND AND
CHILD ARE
IN THERE...
TAEKO
!!
SHO!
HONEY
!!

LOOK AT WHAT YOU'VE DONE! YOU CAN'T SAY THIS WAS AN ACCIDENT!

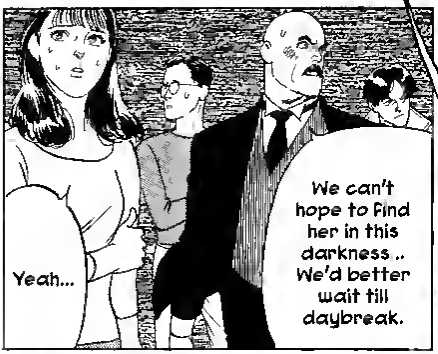
WHERE ARE YOU GOING, TAEKO!?
MO-THER !?


Mother ...?

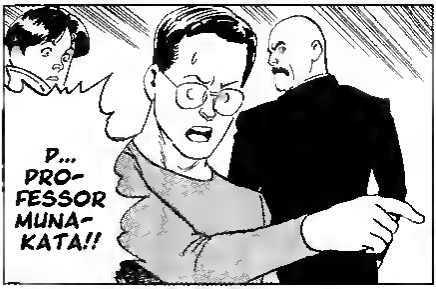
Who are you...?


MR. IKAGO !?
SHE MAY BE GOING TO SWAN LAKE!
TAEKO !!
FOLLOW ME! WE'RE GOING TO FIND YOUR WIFE! IBE, YOU HELP ME OUT, TOO!

WHERE ARE YOU, MOTHER!?
TAEKO!!
The water's all dried-out and only knee-deep, but I don't see her...!!
TAEKO!!
MA'AM!!


We can't hope to find her in this darkness .. We'd better wait till daybreak.
Yeah...

...Did you find her, Mana?
...No, and my father's still looking for her...


P... PRO-FESSOR MUNA-KATA!!

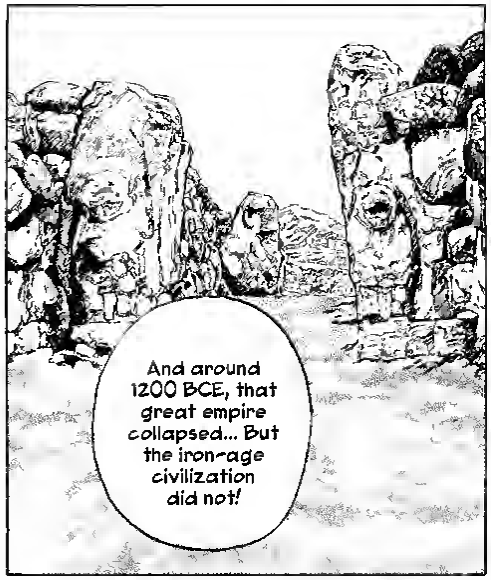
ゴオオオ
INSTEAD OF DIGGING UP THE METEOR EMBEDDED INTO THE CENTER ITSELF, THEY HEATED IT THROUGH A TUNNEL AND REFINED IT DIRECTLY!!
What's that mean?
It's a "Nodatara"!

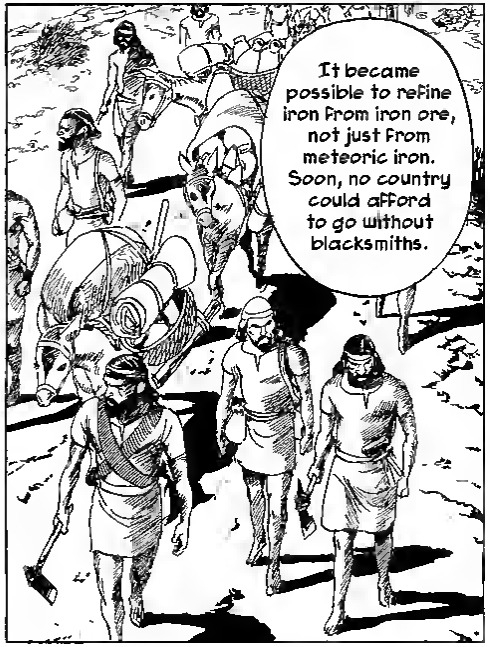
SWAN LAKE IS A CRATER! AND THE METEORIC IRON THAT FELL IN ANCIENT TIMES IS BURNING...

This works by the same principle as the primitive iron kiln called the "Nodatara". A small exhaust port is dug on the top, and the tunnel is filled with charcoal, and wind naturally blows inside.
I...I see! So there was a fragment here...
Meteoric iron? Crater?
Until it was lit by coinci-dence tonight!
But it must've been submerged after a rainfall, so they gave up and made this a shrine to Kanayago.
This must be the tenacity of the ancients in seeking iron...

But perhaps one of them went supernova, and the number of visible stars went down to six.
Subaru, or the Pleiades, once had seven stars
And the Aryan people that migrated from Central Asia into modern Turkey, the Hittites, must have noticed that change.
Then one day...

The seventh star fell to the Earth... Or so they believed.
That is the origin of the legend.
This was the birth of the first iron-age civilization of the Hittites... And iron tools replaced bronze tools as the strongest on Earth!
And they obtained iron from that red-hot "star"...

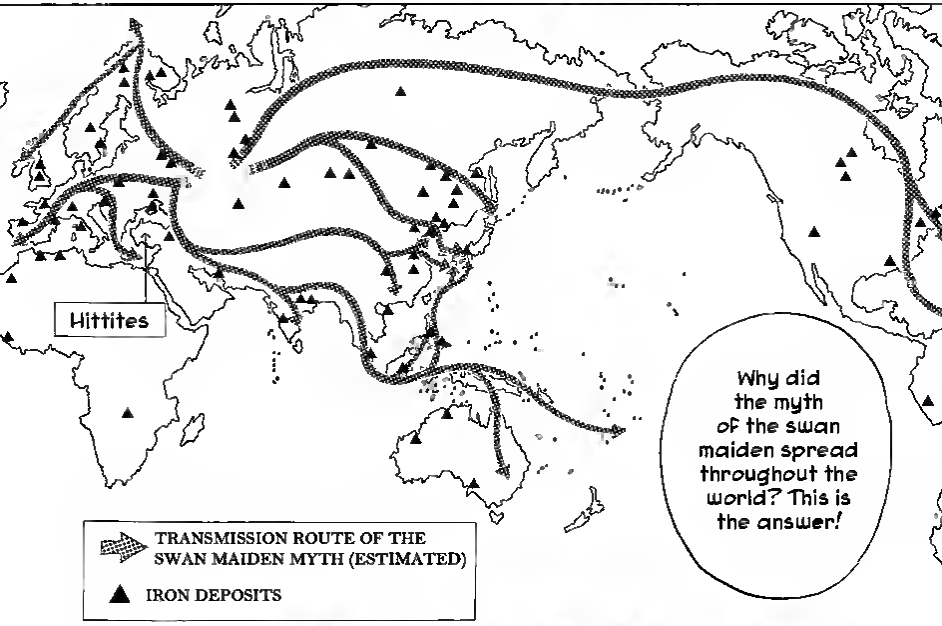

And around 1200 BCE, that great empire collapsed... But the iron-age civilization did not!


It became possible to refine iron from iron ore, not just from meteoric iron. Soon, no country could afford to go without blacksmiths.

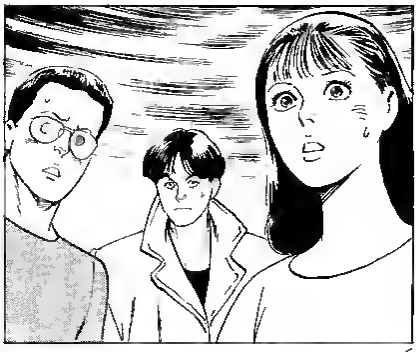
They must have continued to pass down the myth of iron, the myth of the star, and the legend of the seven heavenly maidens...
Most of the records are lost, but a number of myths, including one similar to the myth of Yamata-no-Orochi, in which a hero defeated a dragon god by making it drunk, remain.

The Hittite Empire, wielding their iron weapons, conquered all of Asia Minor, and grew into a mighty nation that even posed a threat to Babylon and Egypt!

Then it would not be strange if the Hittite myths and legends spread with it!
History proves that iron-age civilization spread from the near Orient to every corner of the world.


Hittites
Why did the myth of the swan maiden spread throughout the world? This is the answer!
TRANSMISSION ROUTE OF THE SWAN MAIDEN MYTH (ESTIMATED)
IRON DEPOSITS

You mean the "Tatara" seeking iron, not only in Japan, but all over the world...!?
Y...



Kch ..

That's right, Imibe. Your "Swan and Steel" hypothesis only explained a tiny part of the whole...

Meteoric iron, iron ore, iron sands... The ability to refine iron from any kind of resource came to the Japanese archipelago twenty-four hundred years ago and produced the "Tatara".

two thousand years after Hittite myth of the star of steel...

The myth of the swan came at the same time, and became the myth of the White Kimono,

HEEEEEEEEEY!
HEEEEEEEEEY!
The villagers have all gone to look for her. They know this area well...
I see...
HEEEEEEEEEY!
HEEEEEEEEEY!

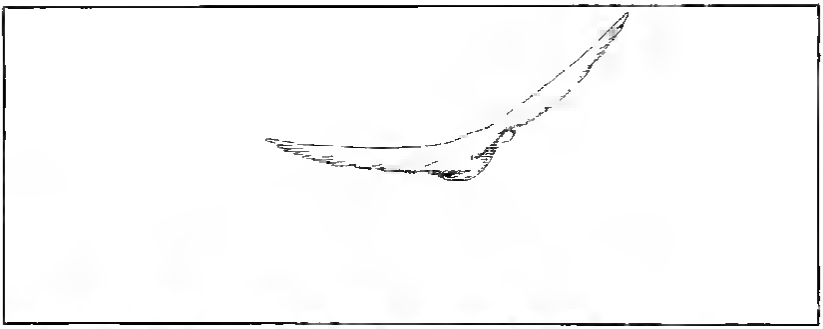
I knew this day would come someday...
I was starting to piece the story of my mother together...
No!
I'm sorry... I feel like this wouldn't have happened if I hadn't come here...
But I will find her!
The Celestial Maiden reclaimed her white kimono, forgot about her entire earthly life, and returned to Heaven...
Hehe... It's just like the myth of the White Kimono.
Good!
I will bring her back! She's lived with us for twenty whole years! That has to mean something!

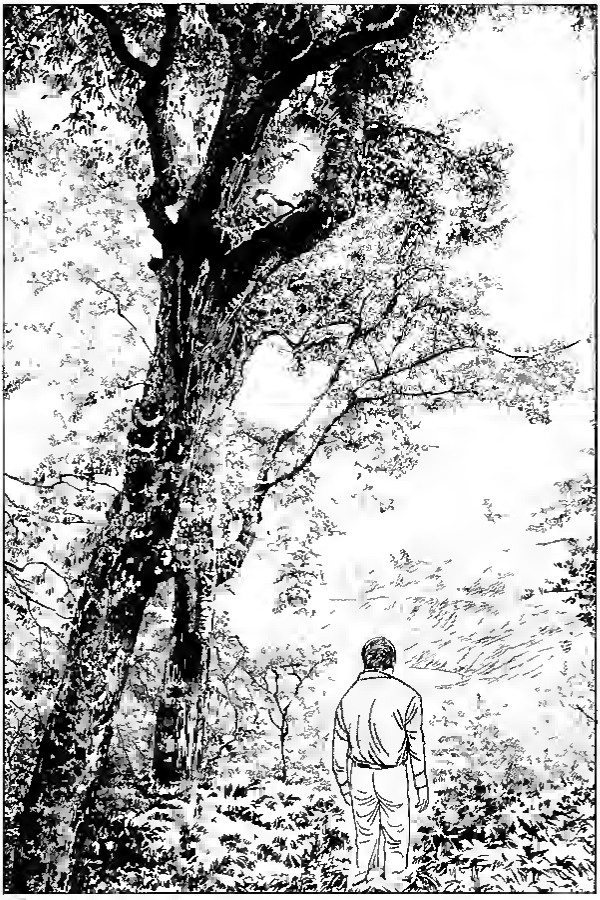
Call me when you come back to school.
I will! Good-bye!
We can dig it up again. It's been tempered by fire time and time again.
I guess the iron sword's burnt, too...
How was I supposed to know that would happen!?
Well, we'll hear you out at the station. Come with us, please.
I TOLD YOU, IT WASN'T ON PUR-POSE!

Will you tell me one thing, Professor Munakata?
W... Wait a second!
I can understand the myth of the star, but how is it connected to the swan?
The swan!
SWANS AND IRON... WHAT CONNECTS THEM? WHY WAS IT THE LEGEND OF THE SWAN THAT SPREAD AROUND THE WORLD WITH IRON-AGE CIVILIZATION!?
Izumo may have one of the leading iron sand deposits, but it is also a famous resting site for swans.. The flight of the swans strangely coincide with iron.
SWAN RESTING SITES
IRON SANDS/ IRON ORE DEPOSITS
SOUTHERN BORDER OF SWAN FLIGHT

But I have a hint!
Oh, my! So even the great Professor Munakata isn't omniscient?
I don't have any conclusive evidence to answer that!
If you mean magnetite, the majority of iron sands in Japan are composed of titanic magnetite, which is highly magnetic.
A great deal of iron ore and iron sands are magnetic... Am I right?
This means that they have organs that are sensitive to magnetism!
We still don't know for sure how migratory birds maintain their sense of direction, but one theory is that they use magnetic fields...

Where there is iron, there are swans...
Which means that people may have pursued the swans as landmarks...

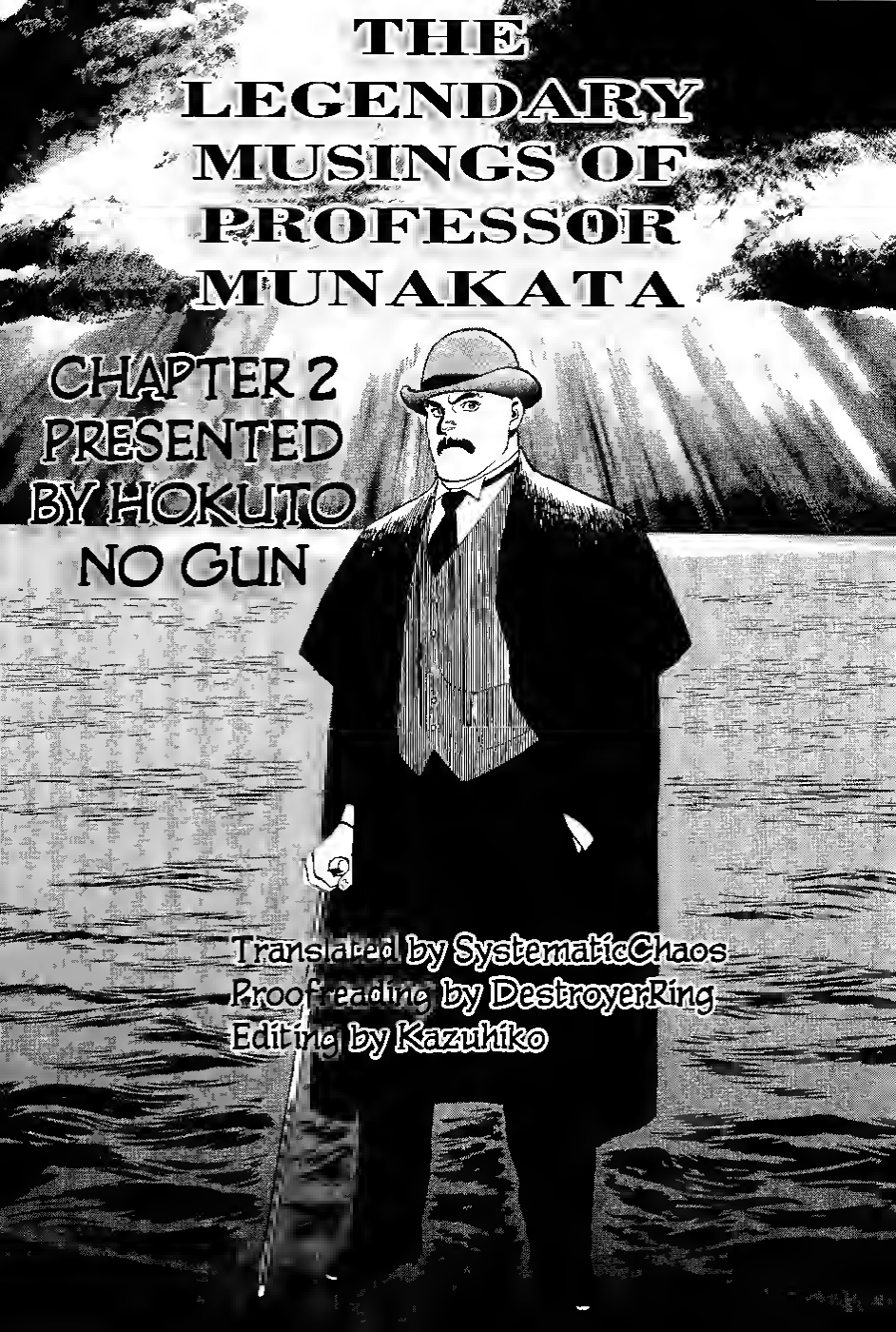




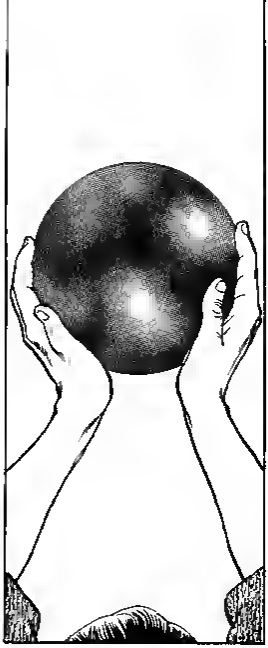
THE LEGENDARY MUSINGS OF PROFESSOR MUNAKATA

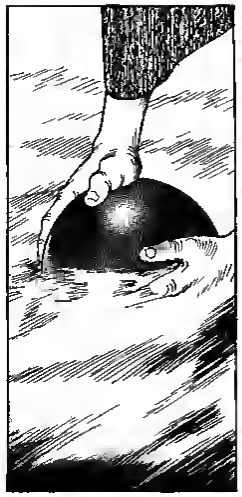
CHAPTER 2

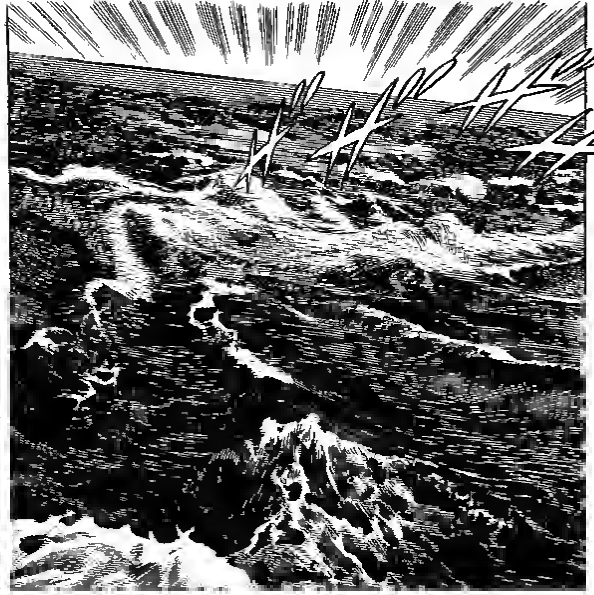
PRESENTED BY HOKUTO NO GUN



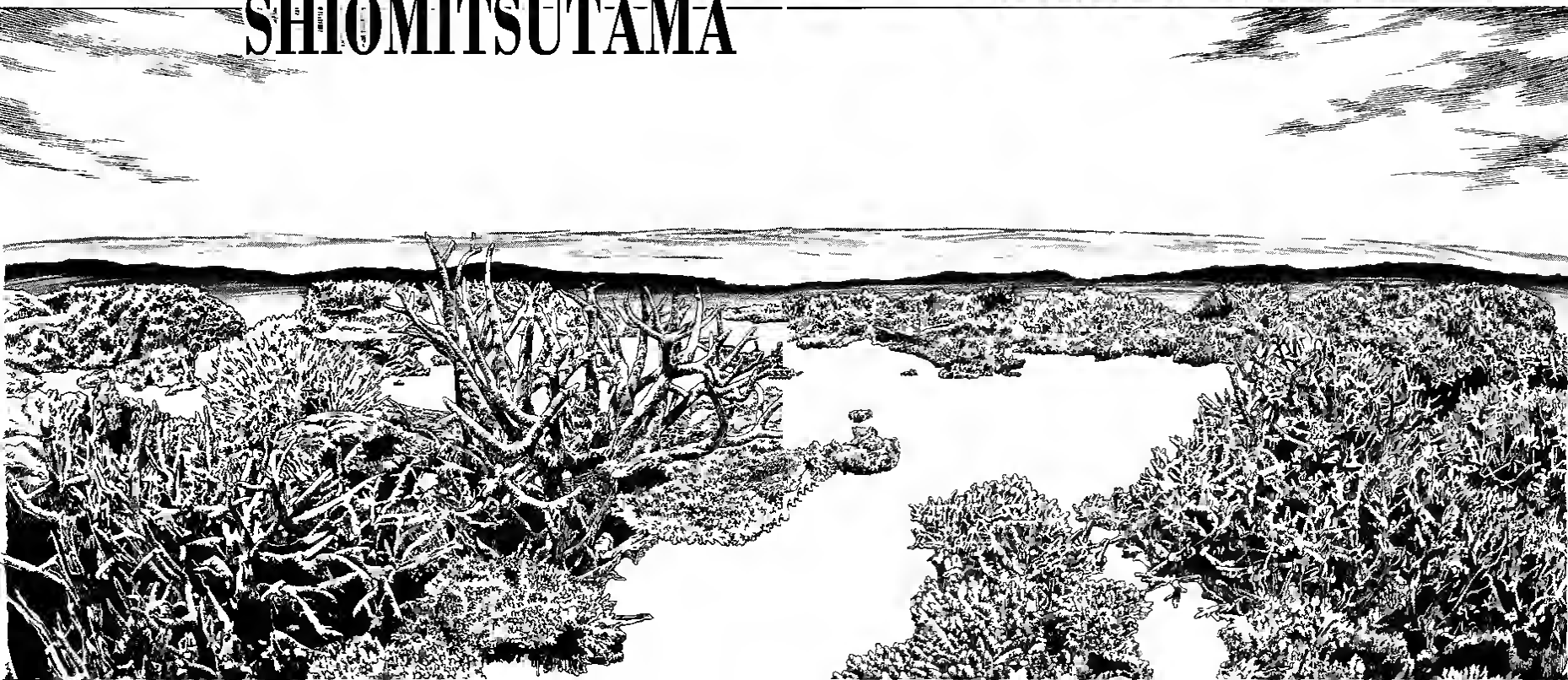
Translated by SystematicChaos
Proofreading by DestroyerRing
Editing by Kazuhiko

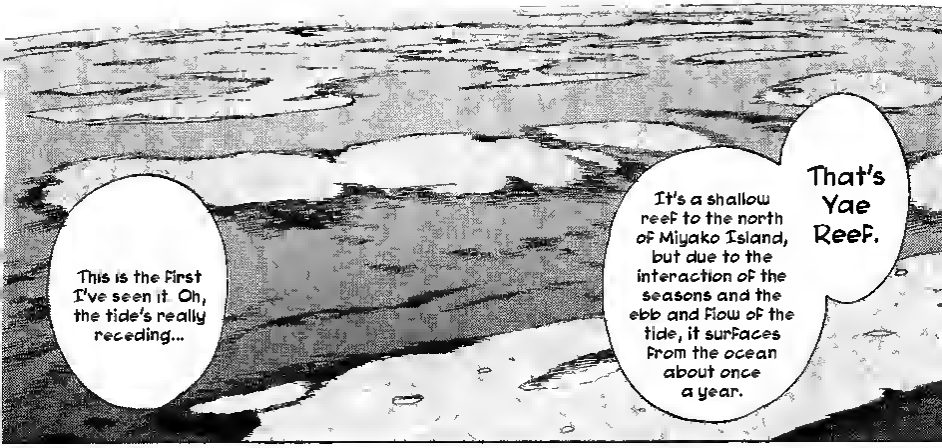




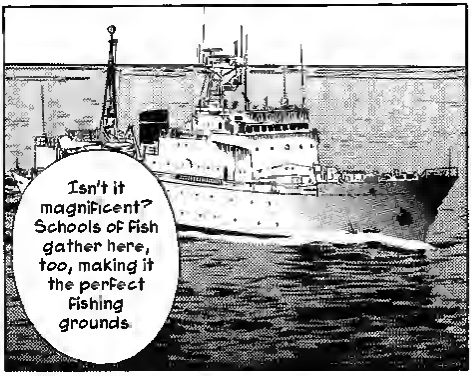


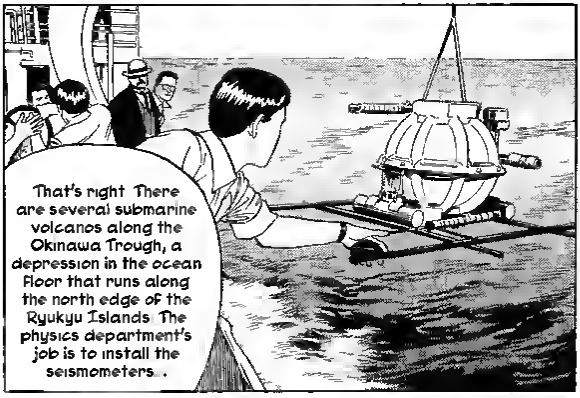
FILE 3: SHIOMITSUTAMA

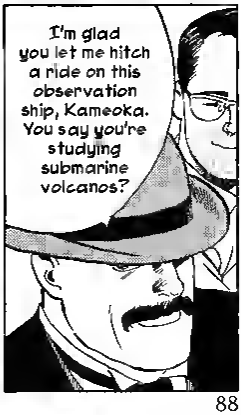


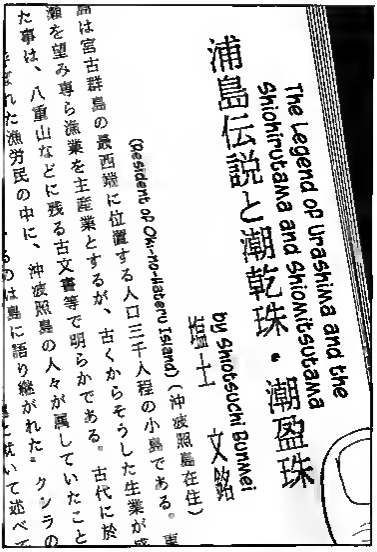

That's Yae Reef.
It's a shallow reef to the north of Miyako Island, but due to the interaction of the seasons and the ebb and flow of the tide, it surfaces from the ocean about once a year.
This is the first I've seen it. Oh, the tide's really receding...

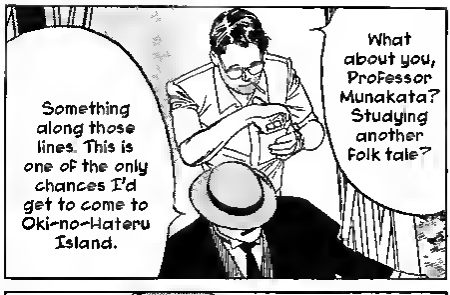
The harvest of the great sea...

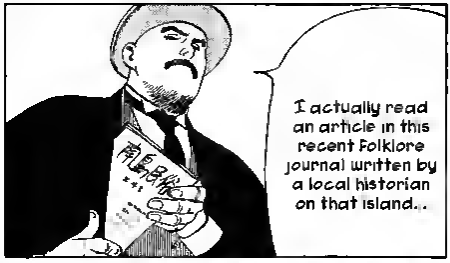

Isn't it magnificent? Schools of fish gather here, too, making it the perfect fishing grounds.

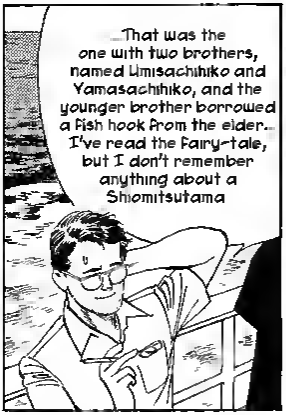

That's right. There are several submarine volcanos along the Okinawa Trough, a depression in the ocean floor that runs along the north edge of the Ryukyu Islands. The physics department's job is to install the seismometers...

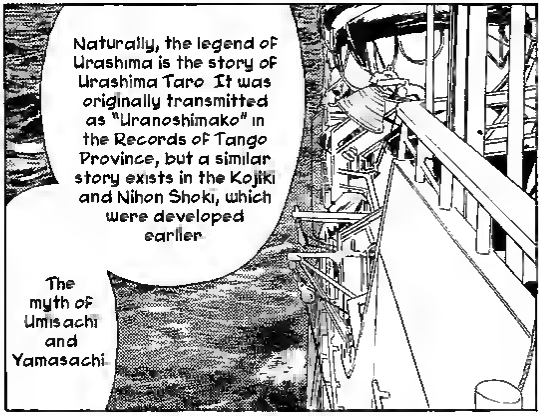

I'm glad you let me hitch a ride on this observation ship, Kameoka. You say you're studying submarine volcanos?


The Legend of Urashima and the Shiohirutama and Shiomitsutama
浦島伝説と潮乾珠・潮盈珠
by Shiotsuchi Bunmei
塩土文鳴
(Residents of Oki-no-Hateru Island) (沖波照島在住)


What about you, Professor Munakata? Studying another folk tale?
Something along those lines. This is one of the only chances I'd get to come to Oki-no-Hateru Island.


I actually read an article in this recent folklore journal written by a local historian on that island..


...That was the one with two brothers, named Umisachihiko and Yamasachihiko, and the younger brother borrowed a fish hook from the elder.. I've read the fairy-tale, but I don't remember anything about a Shiomitsutama


Naturally, the legend of Urashima is the story of Urashima Taro It was originally transmitted as "Uranoshimako" in the Records of Tango Province, but a similar story exists in the Kojiki and Nihon Shoki, which were developed earlier
The myth of Umisachi and Yamasachi

In other legends they are known as Kanju and Manju
The stage is set around Southern Kyushu Umisachihiko was the ancestor of the seafolk of the Hayato Clan, while Yamasachihiko was the ancestor of the Imperial Clan .

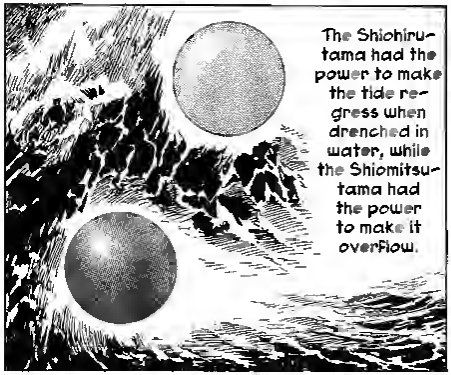
Then a mysterious old man appeared, giving him a ride on a small boat and sending him to the sea floor.

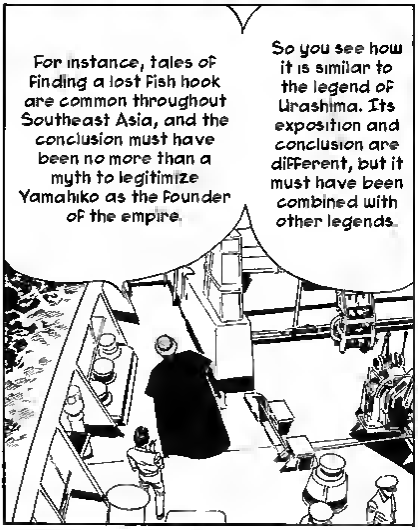
Yamasachihiko was at a loss, with his elder brother Umihiko urging him to return the fish hook that he had lost at sea.

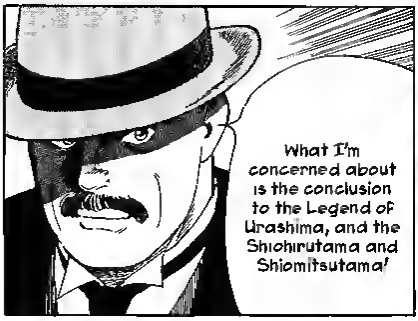
There, there was the palace of the sea god Watatsumi, where he met his daughter Toyotamahime and fell in love.

And as a parting gift, he bestowed him with two pearls, the Shiohirutama and the Shiomitsutama.

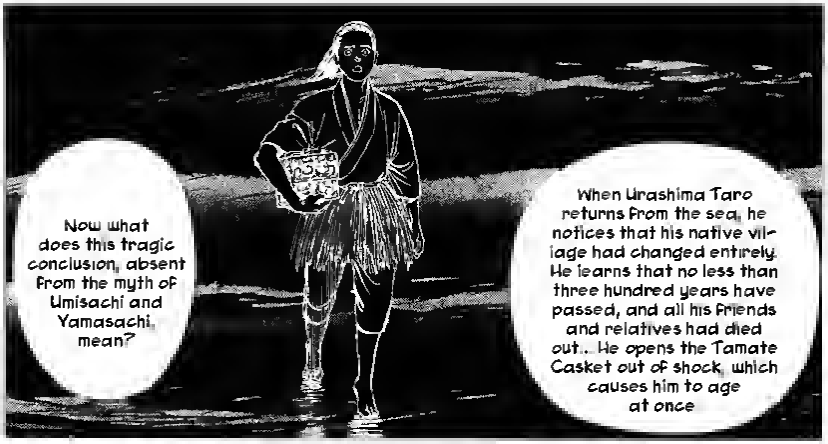
Three years passed like a dream, and when Yamasachihiko was finally able to speak about the missing fish hook, Watatsumi did everything he could to find the fish hook.

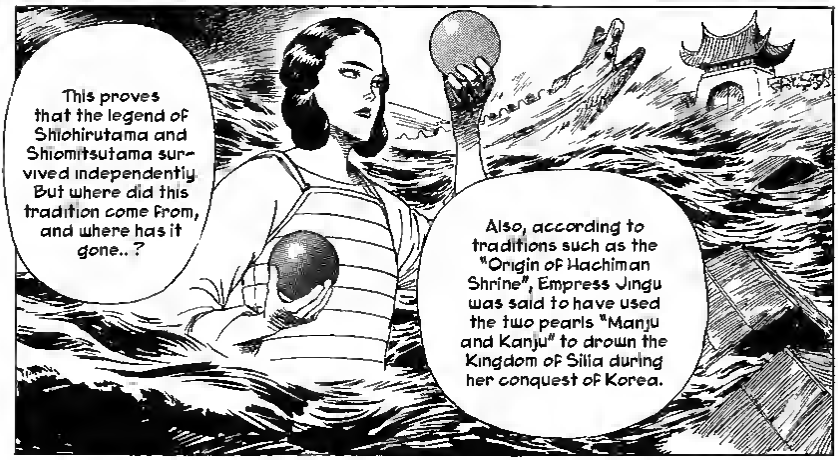

The Shiohirutama had the power to make the tide regress when drenched in water, while the Shiomitsutama had the power to make it overflow.


For instance, tales of finding a lost fish hook are common throughout Southeast Asia, and the conclusion must have been no more than a myth to legitimize Yamahiko as the founder of the empire.
So you see how it is similar to the legend of Urashima. Its exposition and conclusion are different, but it must have been combined with other legends.

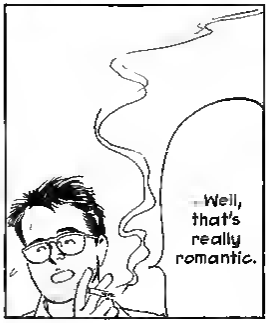

What I'm concerned about is the conclusion to the Legend of Urashima, and the Shiohirutama and Shiomitsutama!

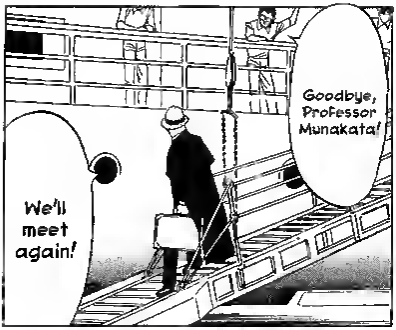
Having returned to his home village, Yamasachihiko returned the fish hook, then used the two pearls to chastise his brother.

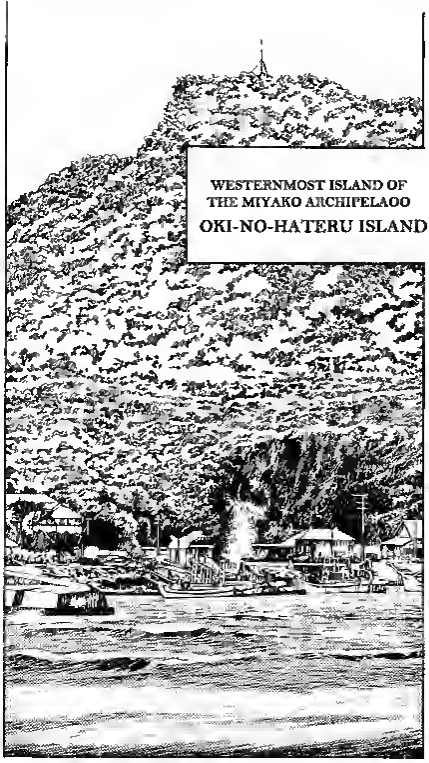

Now what does this tragic conclusion, absent from the myth of Umisachi and Yamasachi, mean?
When Urashima Taro returns from the sea, he notices that his native village had changed entirely. He learns that no less than three hundred years have passed, and all his friends and relatives had died out... He opens the Tamate Casket out of shock, which causes him to age at once

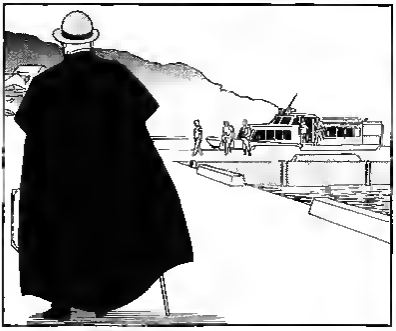

This proves that the legend of Shiohirutama and Shiomitsutama survived independently. But where did this tradition come from, and where has it gone..?
Also, according to traditions such as the "Origin of Hachiman Shrine", Empress Jingu was said to have used the two pearls "Manju and Kanju" to drown the Kingdom of Silla during her conquest of Korea.

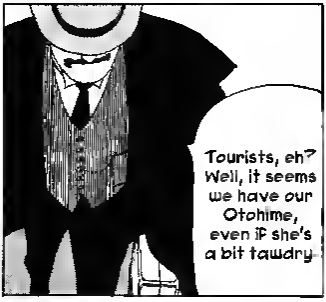
There are some theories that say that the Dragon Palace refers to Ryukyu. I wouldn't be surprised if the two pearls were resting in this sea...

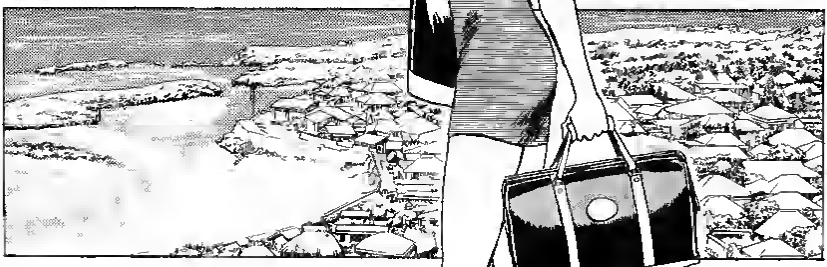

...Well, that's really romantic.


Goodbye, Professor Munakata!
We'll meet again!


WESTERNMOST ISLAND OF THE MIYAKO ARCHIPELAGO
OKI-NO-HATERU ISLAND




Tourists, eh? Well, it seems we have our Otohime, even if she's a bit tawdry

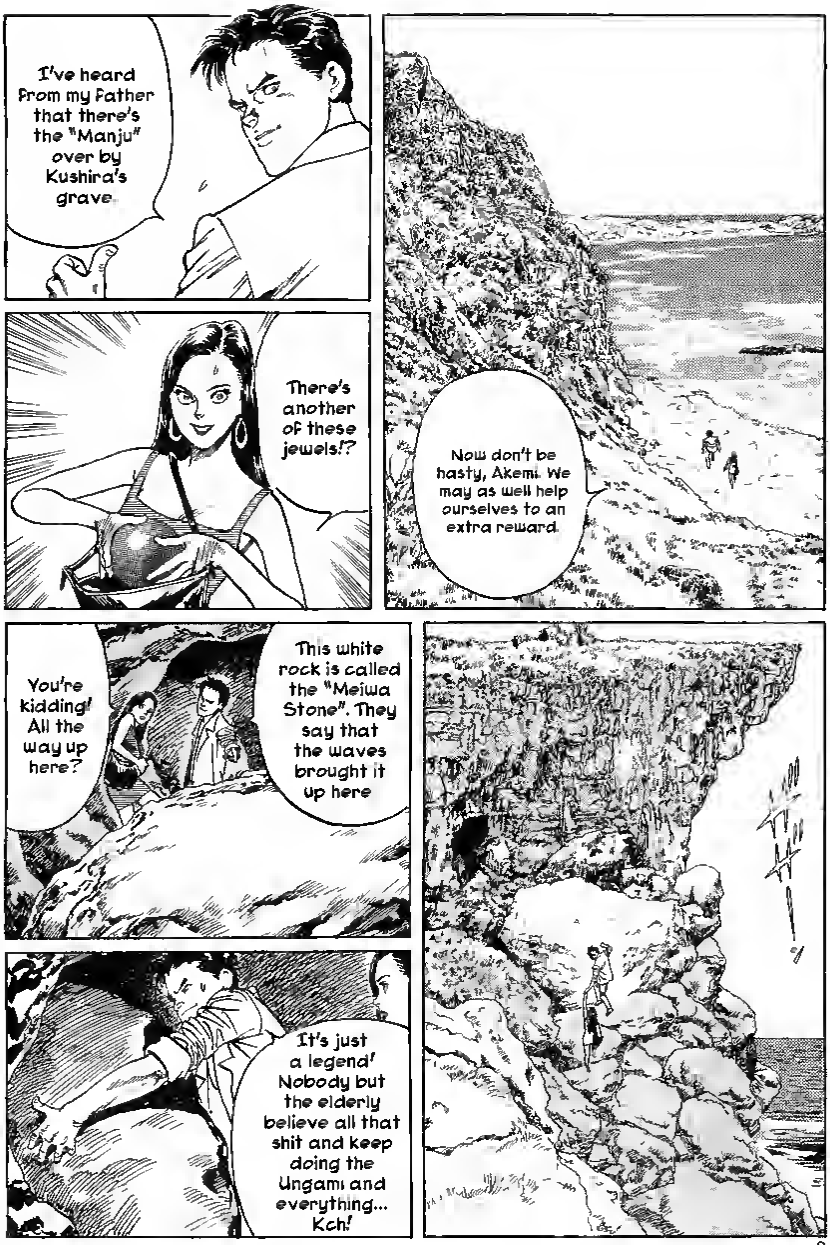


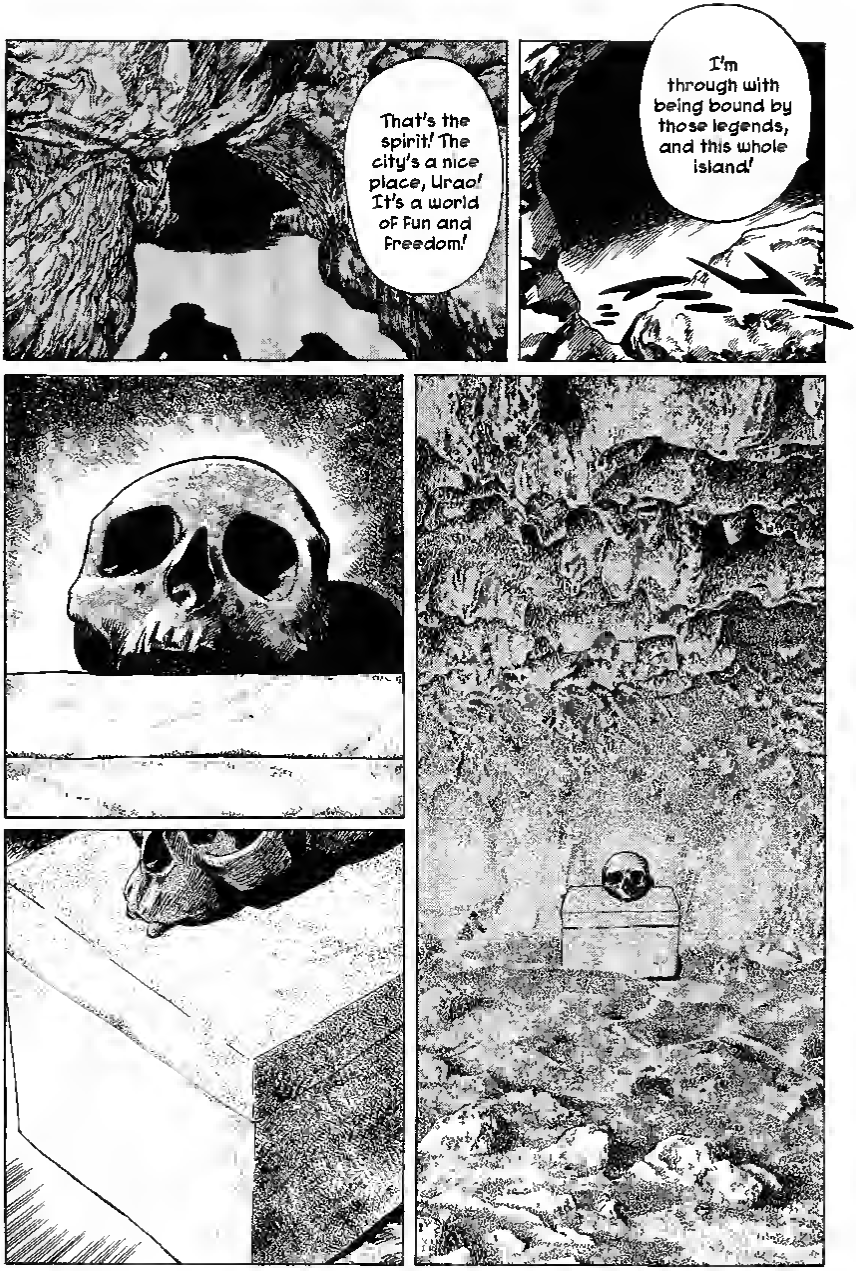
U... URAO!
塩土文銘
AH!
BRO-THER!

BRO-
THER!
URRRGGHH...
PARDON ME! ARE YOU MR. SHIOT-SUCHI!?
Father!
H...He took the Kanju off the altar ...!
KANJU!?

I'm Munakata, from the East Asia University of Culture. I sent you a letter the other day...
So, you're Professor Munakata? Well, my apologies for not writing back..
Ha...haha... That's the name of the jewel we use in the Ungami ritual
Someone long ago must have made it by polishing a coral.
By Kanju, I presume you mean the Shiohirutama. What was it doing here...?
If you don't mind me asking, why did your son steal such a precious jewel..?
He wants money for pleasure! My brother's pretending to be a scuba guide for tourists, and he's been going around enjoying himself!
There is a school of small fish called Suku that come to the reef with the tide...
The Ungami is held at spring tide, when we pray for a bountiful catch around the Yae Reef area. It is my duty as Nichu to administer the ritual.

I apologize for that. No matter. The island is small enough that I can catch up to him...
SENAKO! THAT IS NOT SOMETHING YOU SHOULD BE TELLING A GUEST!
He's started going out with a bad woman, and he won't stop extorting my father for money...
Mr. Shiotsuchi...
No! You need to rest!
Urgh...
Oh...? Hehehe. Then let's get the hell out of here, Urao! There's no point in staying on this rock!
Didn't I tell you? It's a coral jewel. This'll make a fortune back on the mainland.

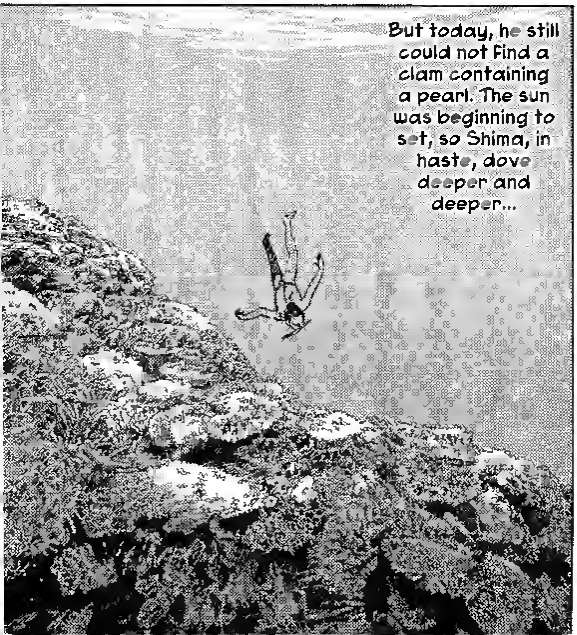

I've heard from my father that there's the "Manju" over by Kushira's grave.
There's another of these jewels!?
Now don't be hasty, Akemi. We may as well help ourselves to an extra reward.
You're kidding! All the way up here?
This white rock is called the "Meiwa Stone". They say that the waves brought it up here
It's just a legend! Nobody but the elderly believe all that shit and keep doing the Ungami and everything... Kch!


That's the spirit! The city's a nice place, Urao! It's a world of fun and freedom!
I'm through with being bound by those legends, and this whole island!

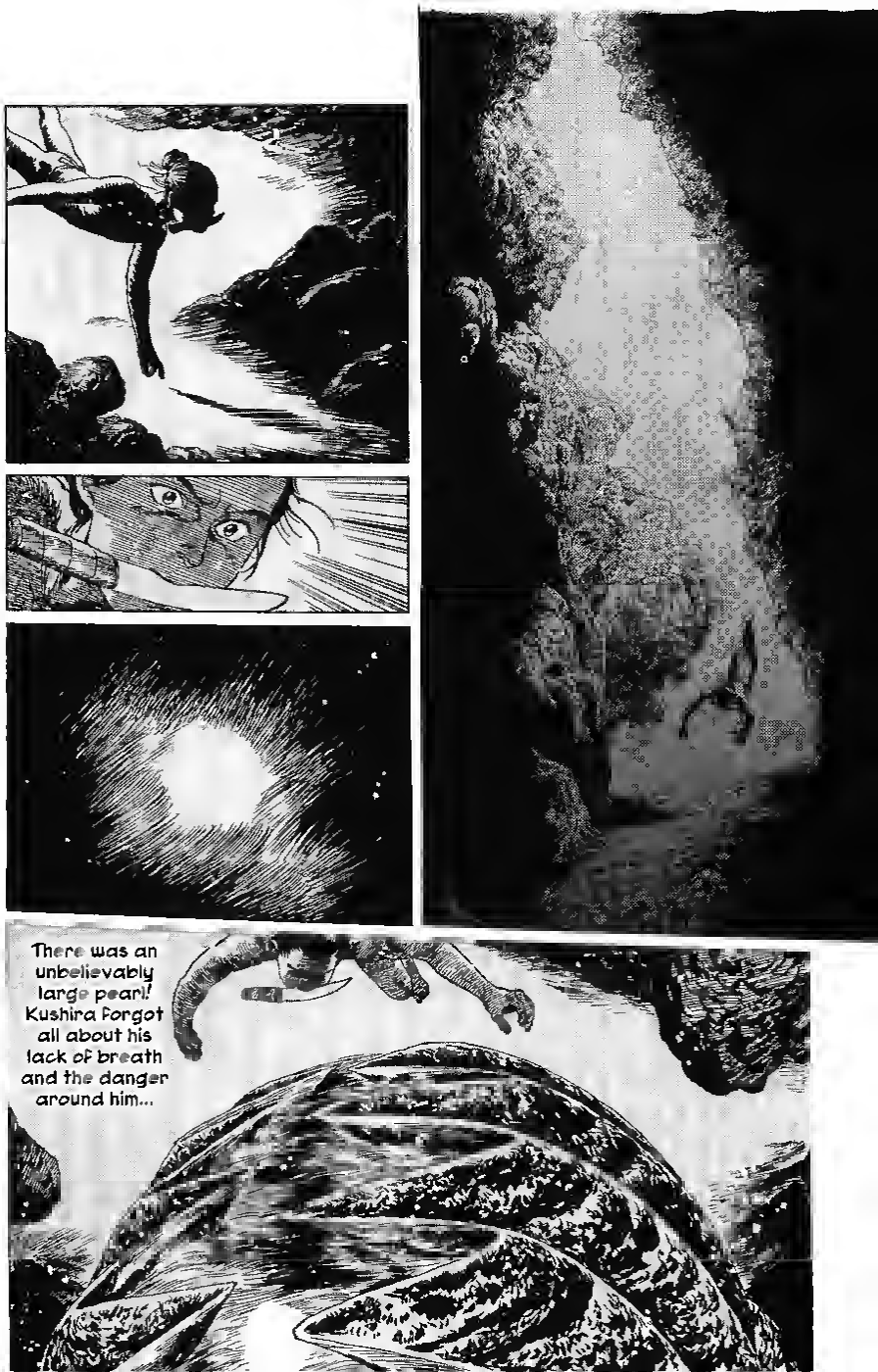
It's in that stone box!
!
This was when Oki-no-Hateru Island was active and bustling with fishers...
Long ago, there was a young man named Kushira.

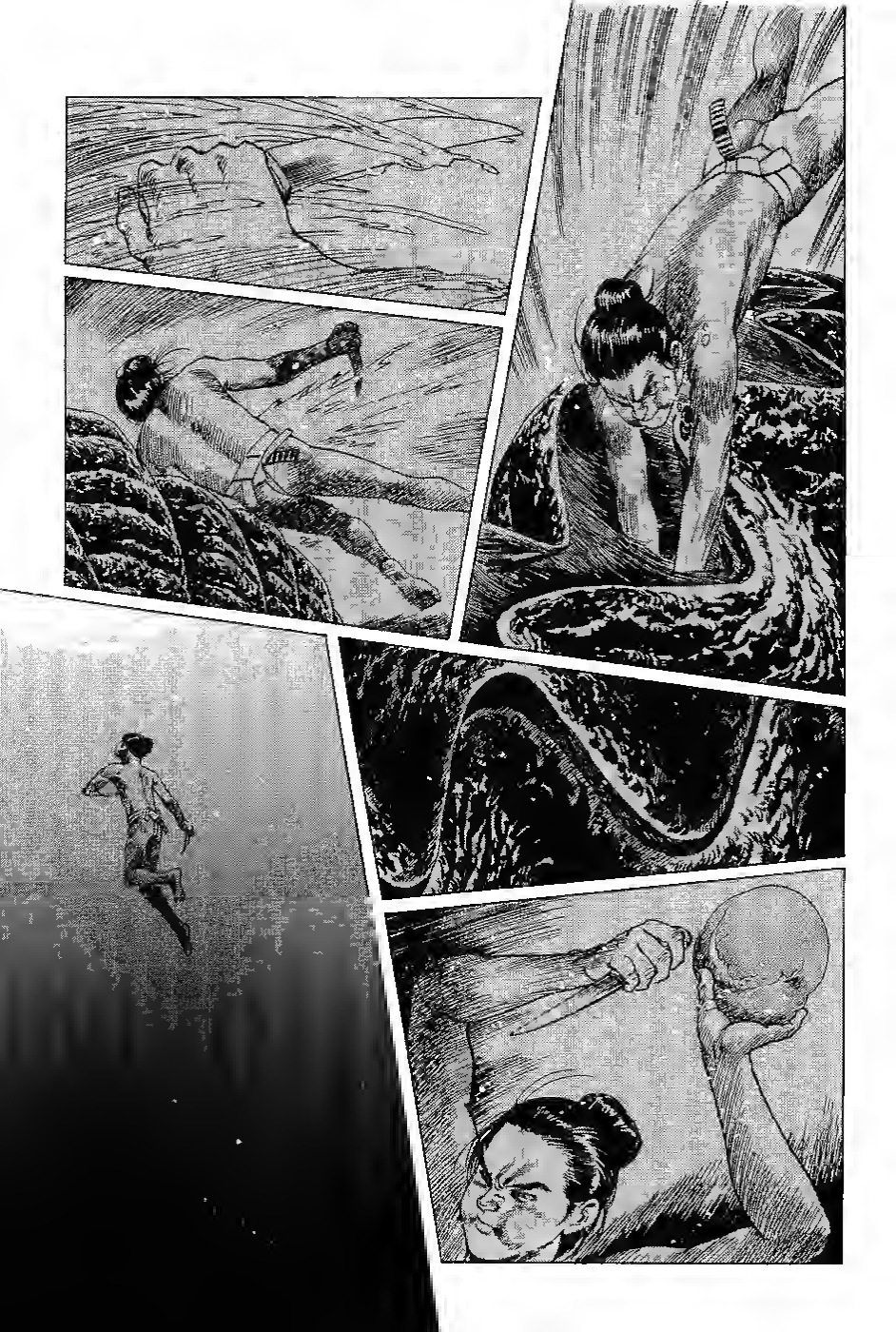
Every day, Kushira would go fishing, seen off by his lover Shima and his parents.

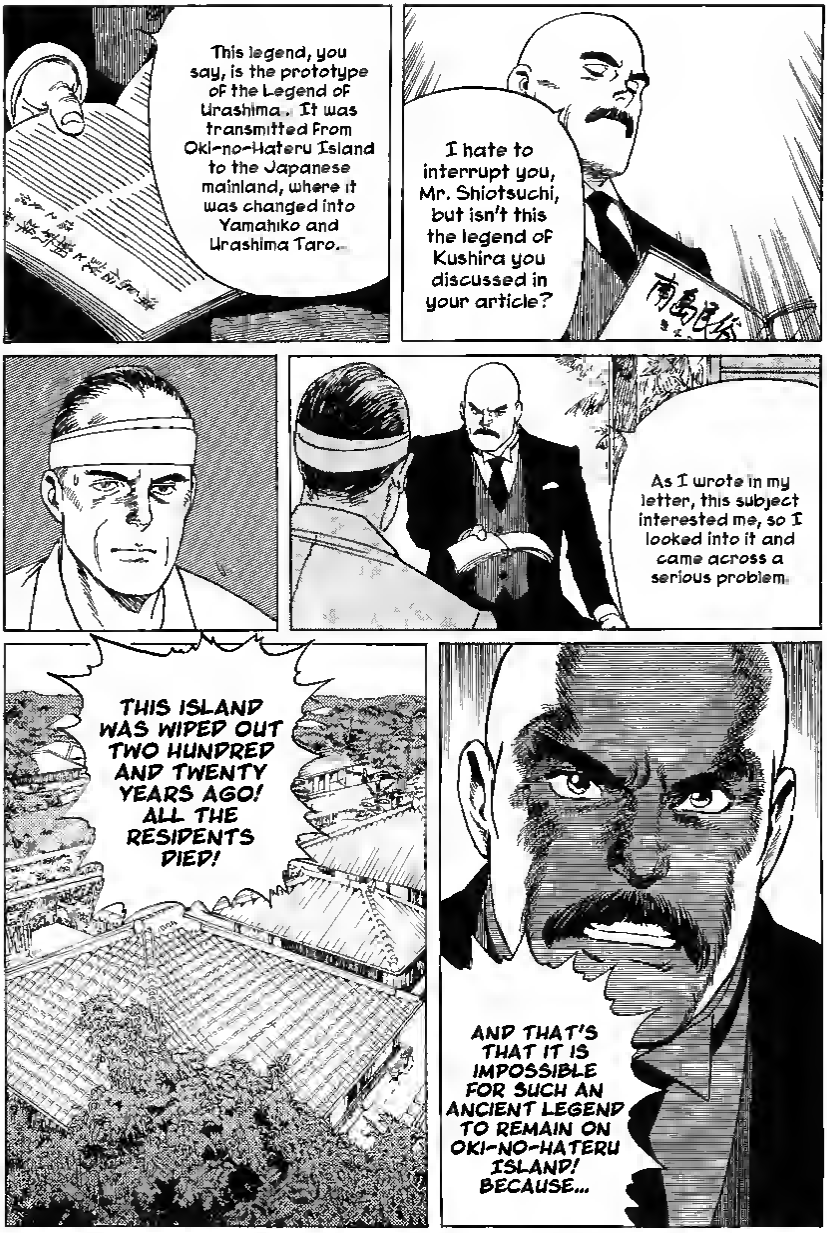
While a crimson coral would do, the men tried their hardest to find a true pearl.
It was the custom on Oki-no-Hateru Island for the groom to present the bride a single "pearl" as a sign of their marriage.


But today, he still could not find a clam containing a pearl. The sun was beginning to set, so Shima, in haste, dove deeper and deeper...

After Kushira had finished fishing, and his colleagues had turned in, he dived time and time again...
His wedding to Shima drew near.


There was an unbelievably large pearl! Kushira forgot all about his lack of breath and the danger around him...




This legend, you say, is the prototype of the Legend of Urashima. It was transmitted from Oki-no-Hateru Island to the Japanese mainland, where it was changed into Yamahiko and Urashima Taro.
I hate to interrupt you, Mr. Shiotsuchi, but isn't this the legend of Kushira you discussed in your article?
As I wrote in my letter, this subject interested me, so I looked into it and came across a serious problem.
THIS ISLAND WAS WIPED OUT TWO HUNDRED AND TWENTY YEARS AGO! ALL THE RESIDENTS DIED!
AND THAT'S THAT IT IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR SUCH AN ANCIENT LEGEND TO REMAIN ON OKI-NO-HATERU ISLAND! BECAUSE...

One?
You're right. They were all but wiped out. But one remained...
Y...
SOME-BODY'S RAN-SACKED KUSHIRA'S GRAVE!!
NI-CHU!
Mr. Shiotsuchi, I suspect that there is something hidden within your hypothesis! And I've come to find out...

So this is Kushira...!
I suppose he really existed! And not that long ago, either!
It was always like this. I don't know if it was natural weathering, or if someone broke it.
This is where the Manju... the Shiomitsutama was stored.
You mean the giant pearl that Kushira picked...!?

Do not go to Katashiki....!?
WAIT A MINUTE. THERE'S SOMETHING ON THE INSIDE OF THE LID...
YAE REEF'S COMPOSED OF OVER A HUNDRED REEFS, AND SAILORS HAVE GIVEN THEM ALL NAMES SINCE THE OLD DAYS. AND ONE OF THEM IS KATASHIKI REEF!
THERE'S A CAVE UNDERNEATH THE REEF. AND THE UNDERSEA CAVES AROUND HERE HAVE CLAMS SO RARE THEY'RE CALLED LIVING FOSSILS, AND SCHOLARS EVEN COME TO RESEARCH THEM...
I WOULDN'T BE SURPRISED IF THERE WAS A MASSIVE PEARL-BEARING CLAM DOWN THERE!
IT'S WORTH LOOKING! IF NOT, WE CAN ALWAYS JUST SKEDADDLE!

T...THE SHIO-MITSUTAMA MUST NOT BE REMOVED FROM THE SEA! OR ELSE SOMETHING DREADFUL WILL HAPPEN!
Was that passed down to you from Kushira? That, and to go not to Katashiki... He was no ancient! He lived two hundred and twenty years ago!
KUSHIRA WAS THE SOLE SURVIVOR OF OKI-NO-HATERU ISLAND TWO HUNDRED AND TWENTY YEARS AGO! AM I RIGHT!?
.....

MY FATHER WILL CATCH UP TO US IF WE KEEP WASTING TIME HERE... LET'S JUST GIVE UP!
NO! JUST LOOK HARDER!
TCH. I DON'T SEE ANY CAVES DOWN THERE.
NOW GO BACK DOWN ONE MORE TIME! I'M GOING WITH YOU!!
I CAN'T GIVE UP ON A PEARL THIS SIZE!

ON MARCH 10TH, 1771, OR MEIWA YEAR 8, OVER TWO HUNDRED AND TWENTY YEARS AGO, MT. YAE AND THE MIYAKO ISLANDS WERE ASSAULTED BY A TSUNAMI LIKE NEVER BEFORE, WHICH THEY CALLED THE "GREAT MEIWA TSUNAMI"...!
ACCORDING TO THE RECORDS, THE WAVES WERE OVER EIGHTY-FIVE METERS HIGH!
OVER TWO THOUSAND HOMES WERE WASHED AWAY, AND TWELVE THOUSAND LOST THEIR LIVES. THAT TSUNAMI WAS THE GREATEST IN RECORDED WORLD HISTORY...

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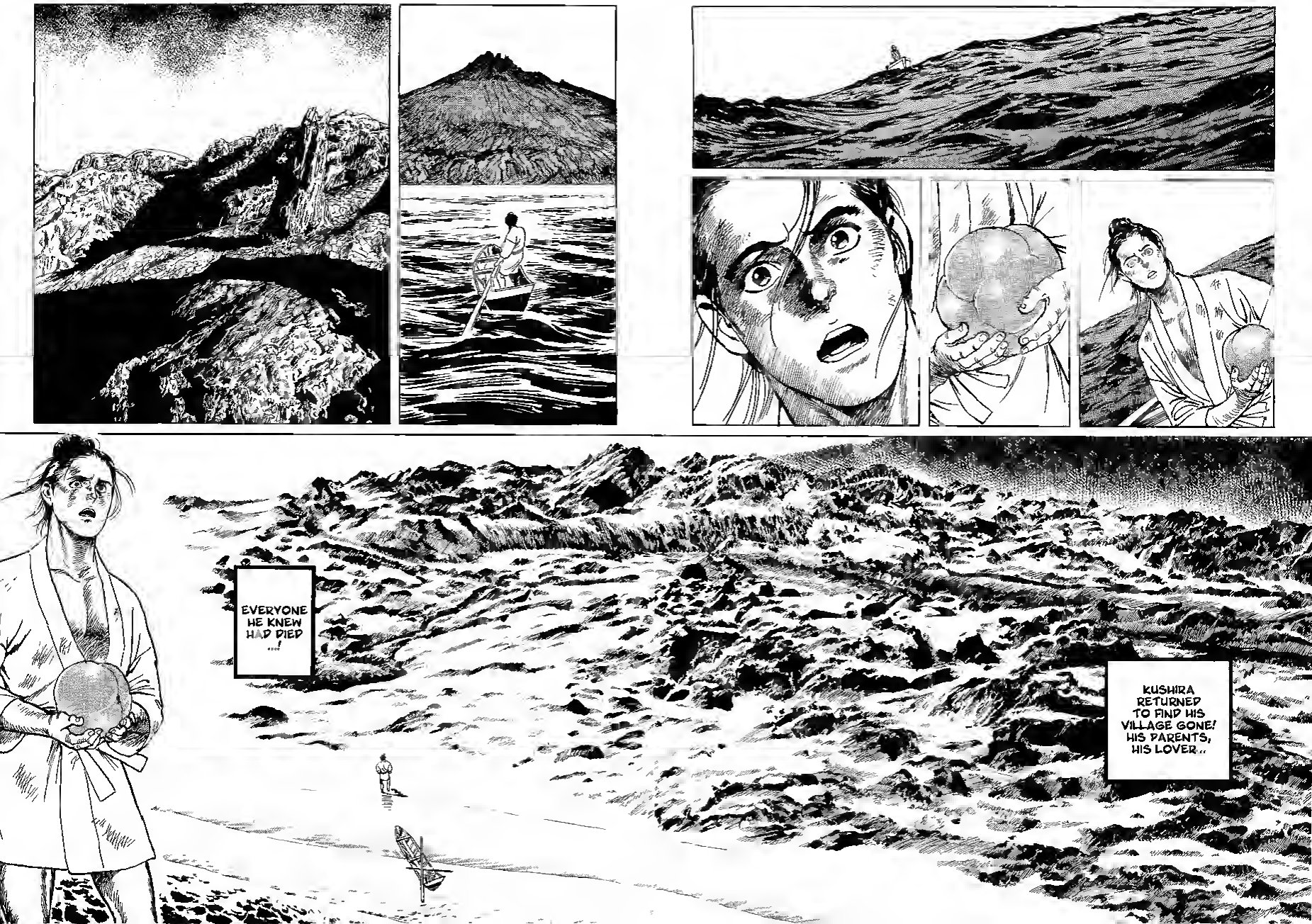
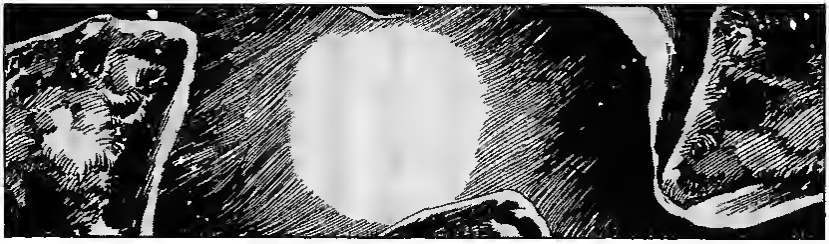
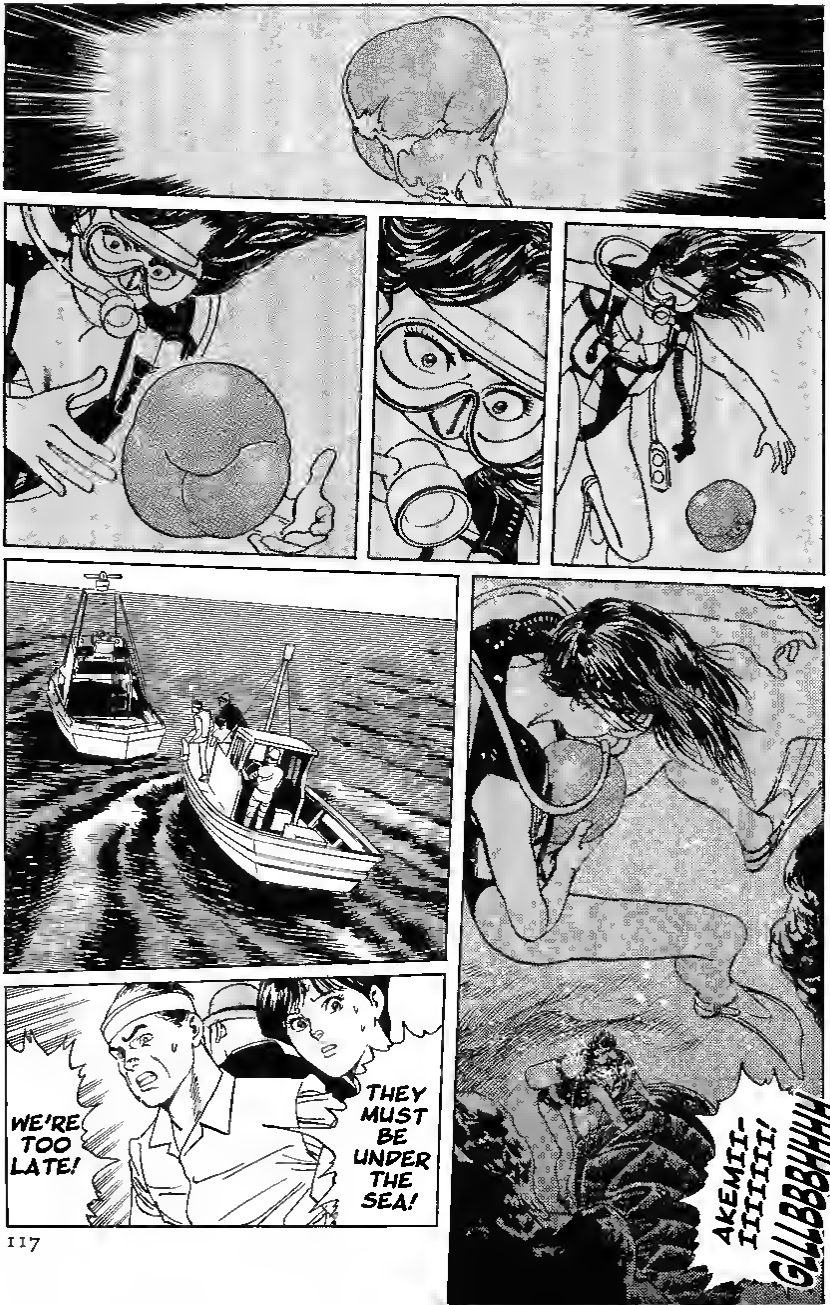
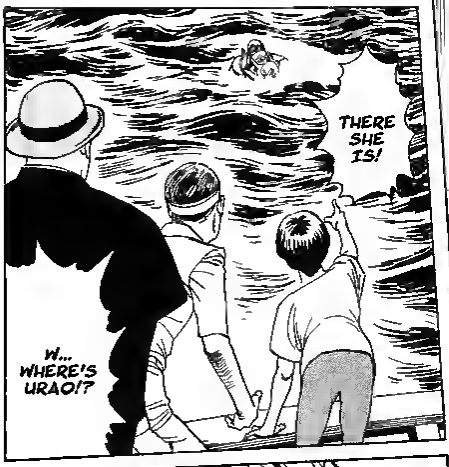

EVERYONE HE KNEW HAD DIED ...!
KUSHIRA RETURNED TO FIND HIS VILLAGE GONE! HIS PARENTS, HIS LOVER..

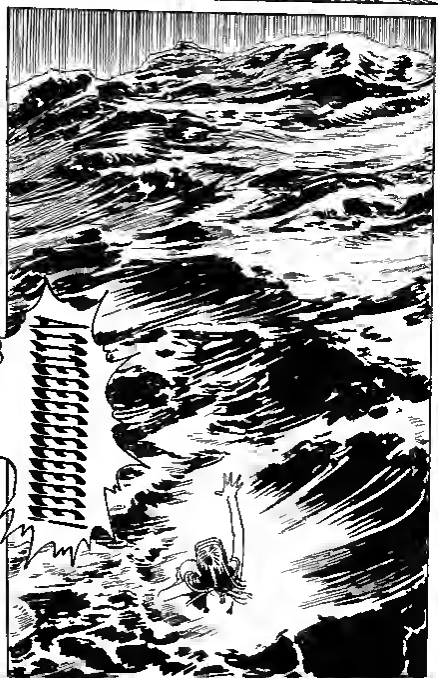
KUSHIRA MUST HAVE BELIEVED THAT PEARL WAS THE SHIOMITSU-TAMA, AND THAT IT CAUSED THE TSUNAMI!
THE LEGEND GOES BACK FURTHER THAN THAT! THAT STEALING A JEWEL FROM THE CAVERNS BELOW THE REEF WOULD CAUSE A TSUNAMI...
KUSHIRA REMEMBERED THAT LEGEND AND PASSED IT ON!
I CAN'T PROVE IT, BUT THAT ONE TRADITION HAS TO BE THE PROTOTYPE FOR THE LEGEND OF URASHIMA!
SOMETHING LIKE THAT MUST HAVE HAPPENED IN ANCIENT TIMES!



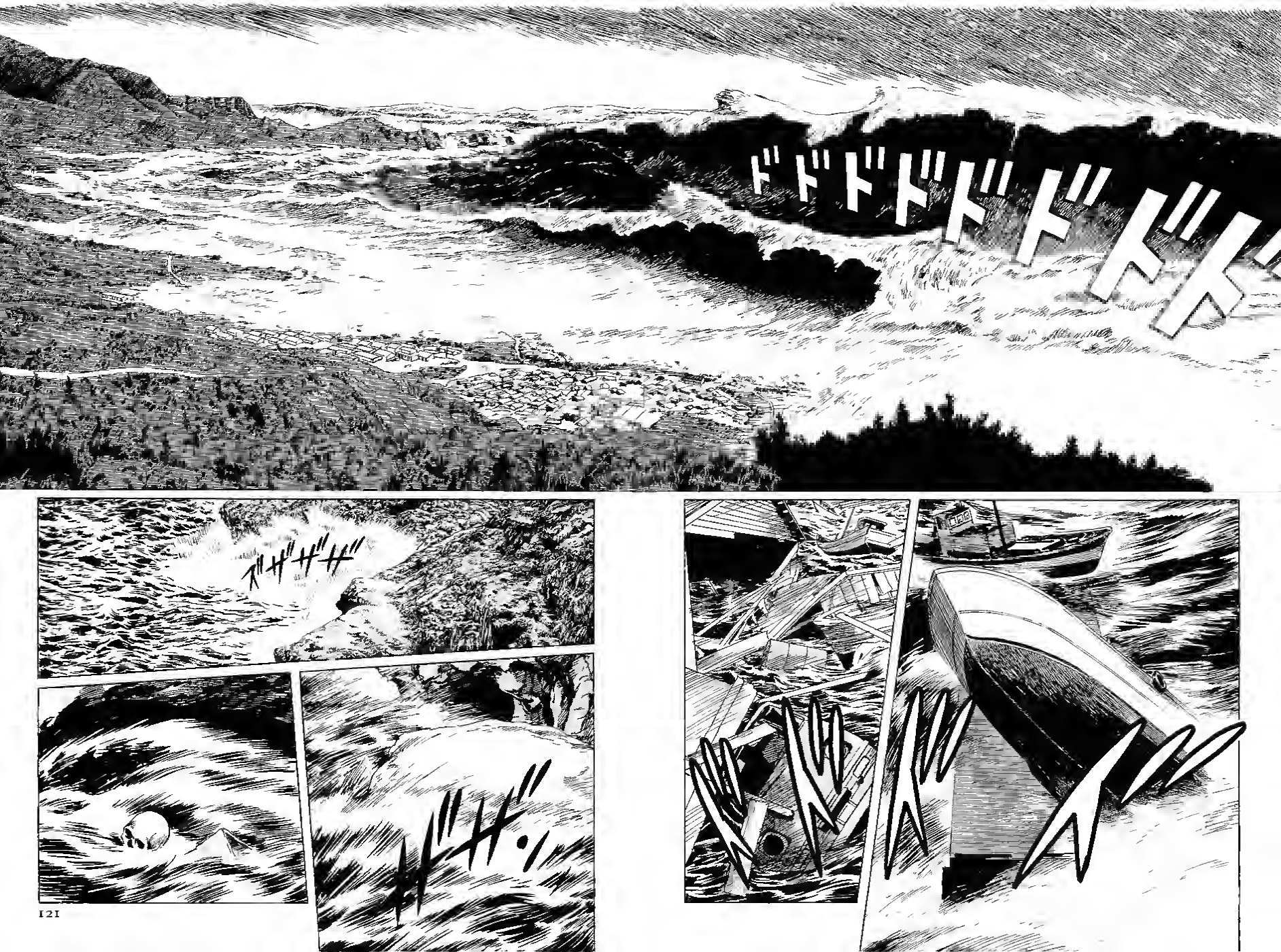
H... HELP ME, AKEMI!
WAAAAAAAAUGH!


AKEMII-IIIII!
GLLLBBHHHH...
THEY MUST BE UNDER THE SEA!
WE'RE TOO LATE!




AHHH

W... WHAT THE ...!?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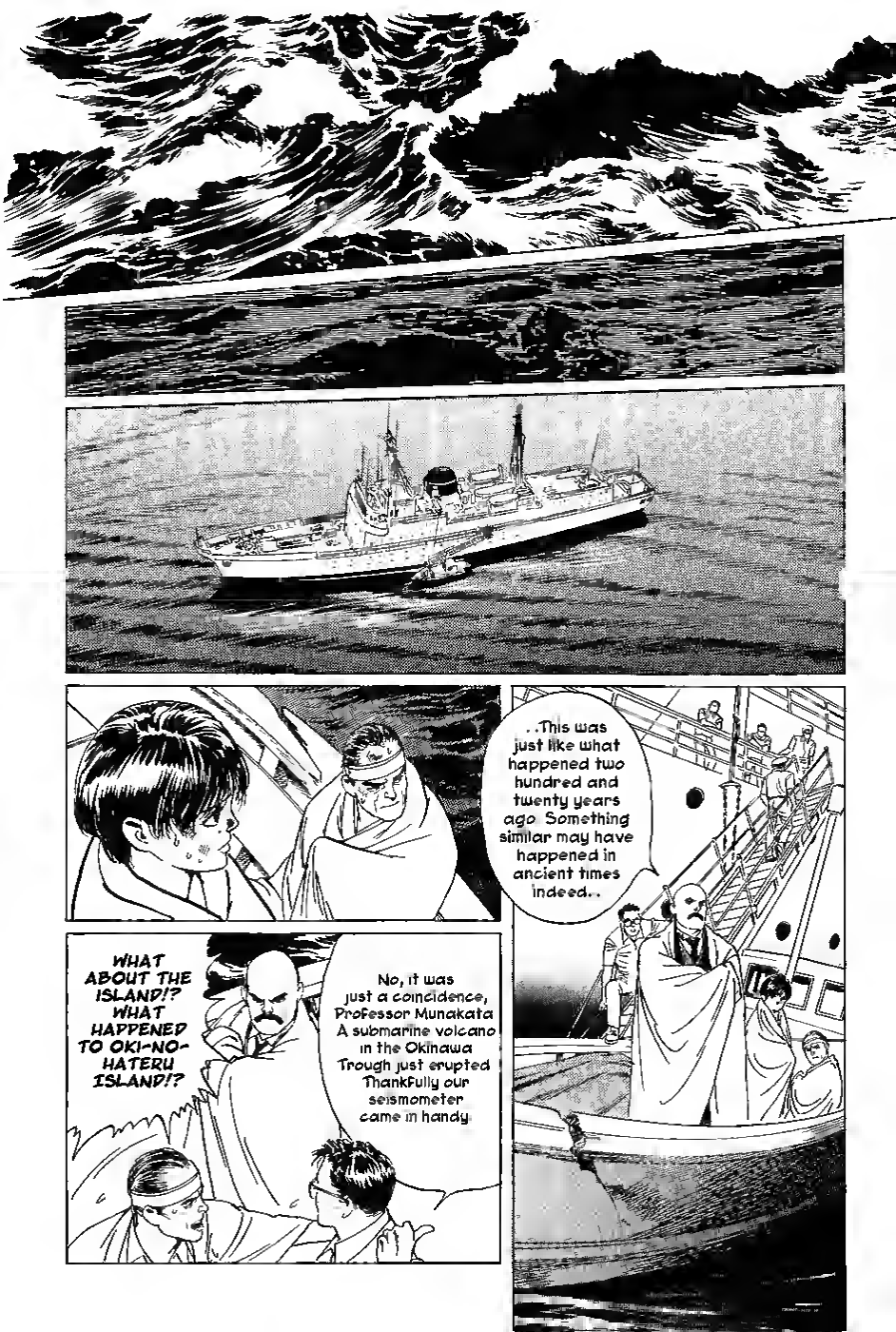
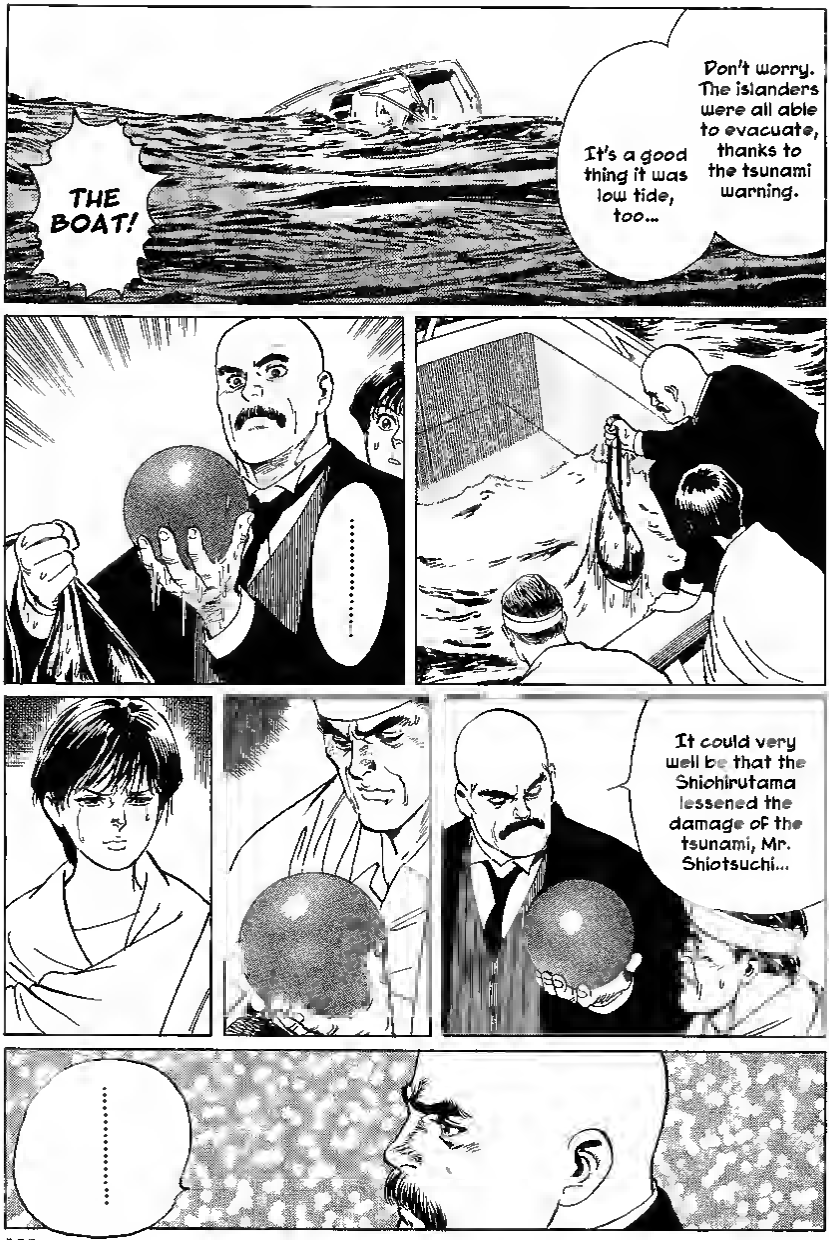

..This was just like what happened two hundred and twenty years ago. Something similar may have happened in ancient times indeed..
WHAT ABOUT THE ISLAND!? WHAT HAPPENED TO OKI-NO-HATERU ISLAND!?
No, it was just a coincidence, Professor Munakata. A submarine volcano in the Okinawa Trough just erupted. Thankfully our seismometer came in handy.

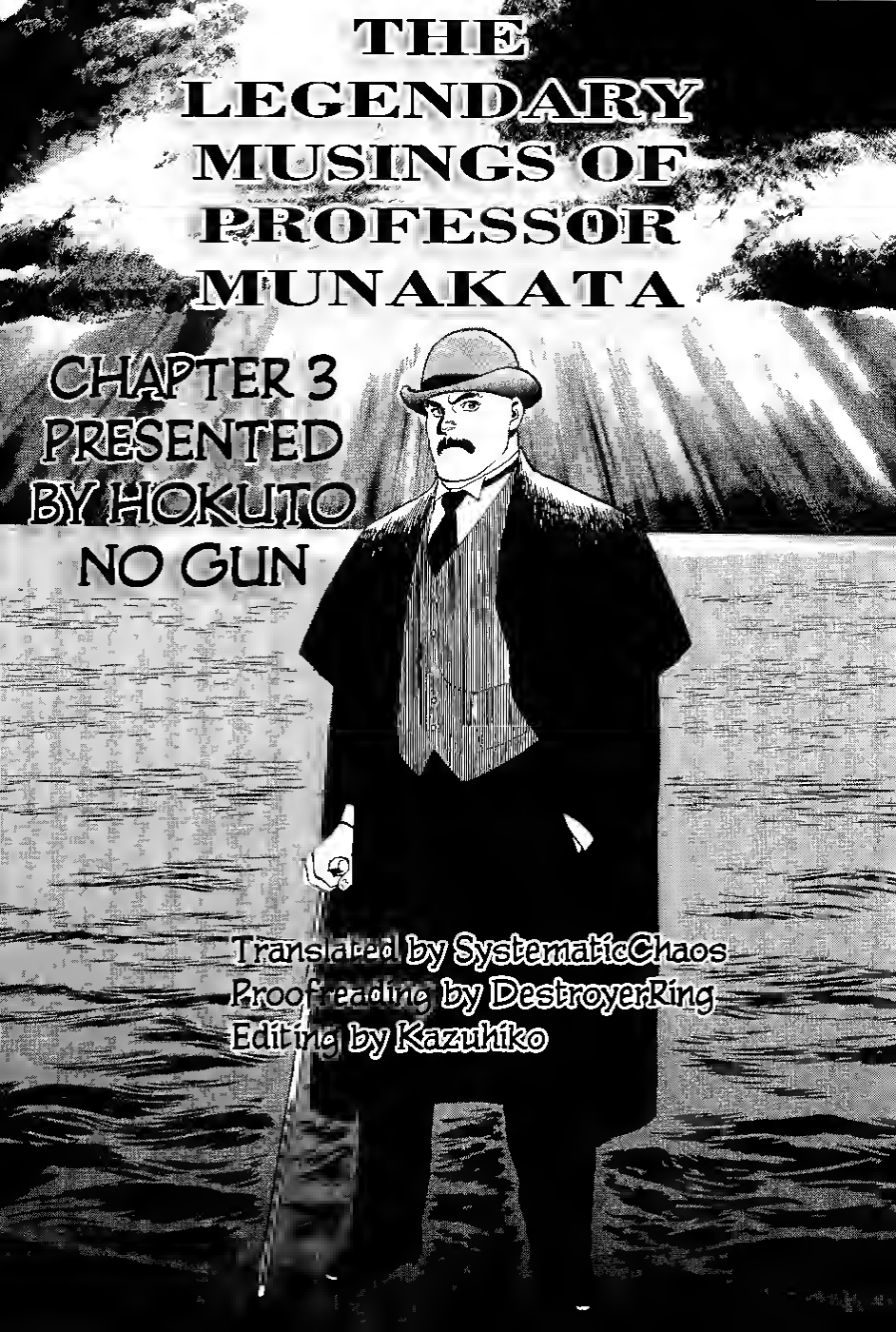

THE BOAT!
It's a good thing it was low tide, too...
Don't worry. The islanders were all able to evacuate, thanks to the tsunami warning.
.....
It could very well be that the Shiohirutama lessened the damage of the tsunami, Mr. Shiotsuchi...
.....

praying that the sea would never overflow again...
He continued to do this until he grew old...
This was the Kanju.. The Shiohirutama..
On his now deserted island home, Kushira created a pearl of coral and continued to polish it
They say that the devastated islands only returned to their original populations 150 years later...
It took a long time for the people to recover from the Great Tsunami of 1771.

THE LEGENDARY MUSINGS OF PROFESSOR MUNAKATA

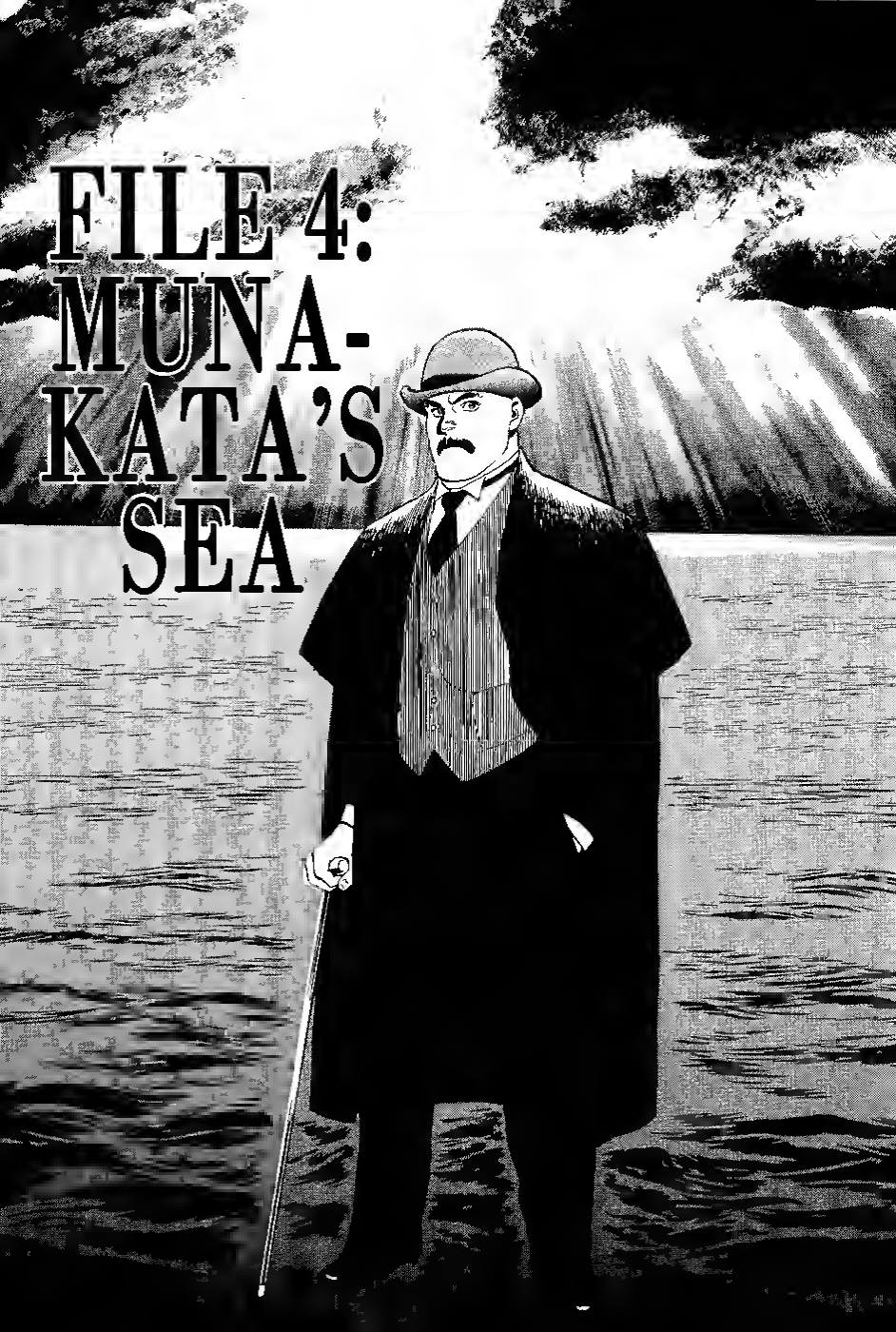
CHAPTER 3

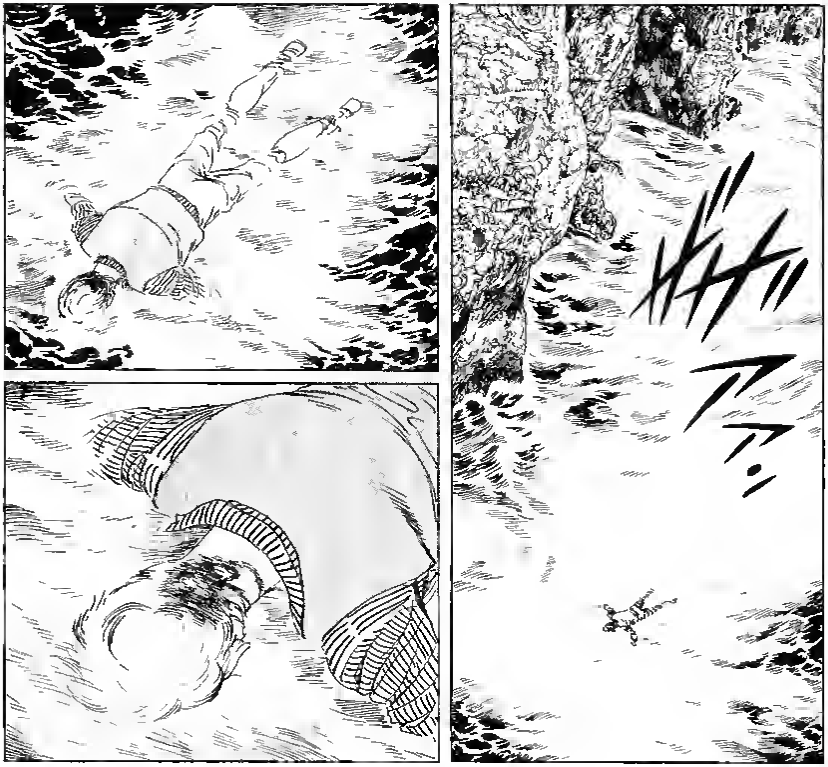
PRESENTED BY HOKUTO NO GUN



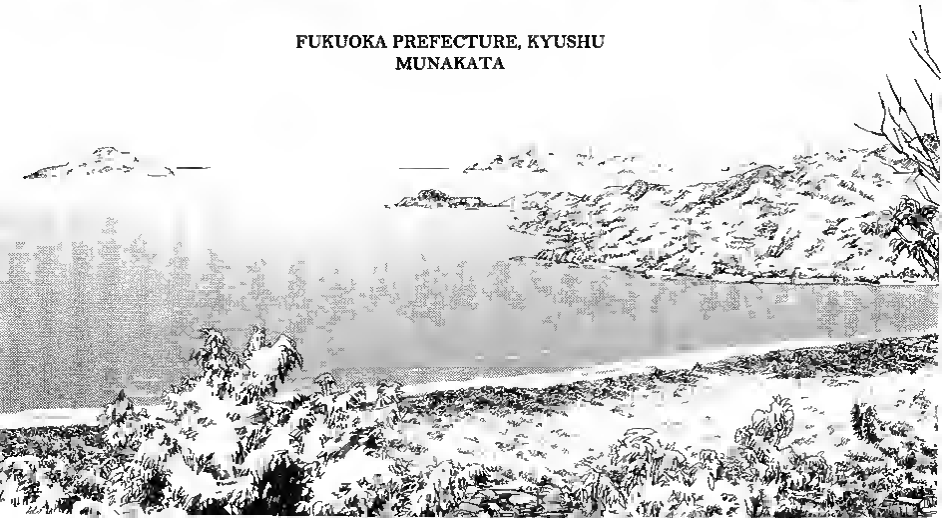
Translated by SystematicChaos
Proofreading by DestroyerRing
Editing by Kazuhiko

FILE 4: MUNAKATA'S SEA



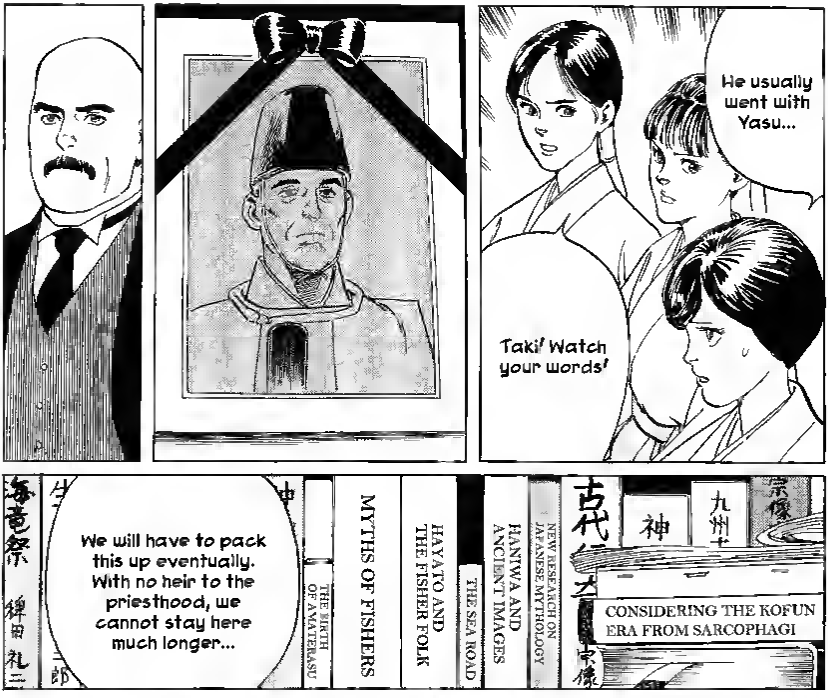


FUKUOKA PREFECTURE, KYUSHU
MUNAKATA

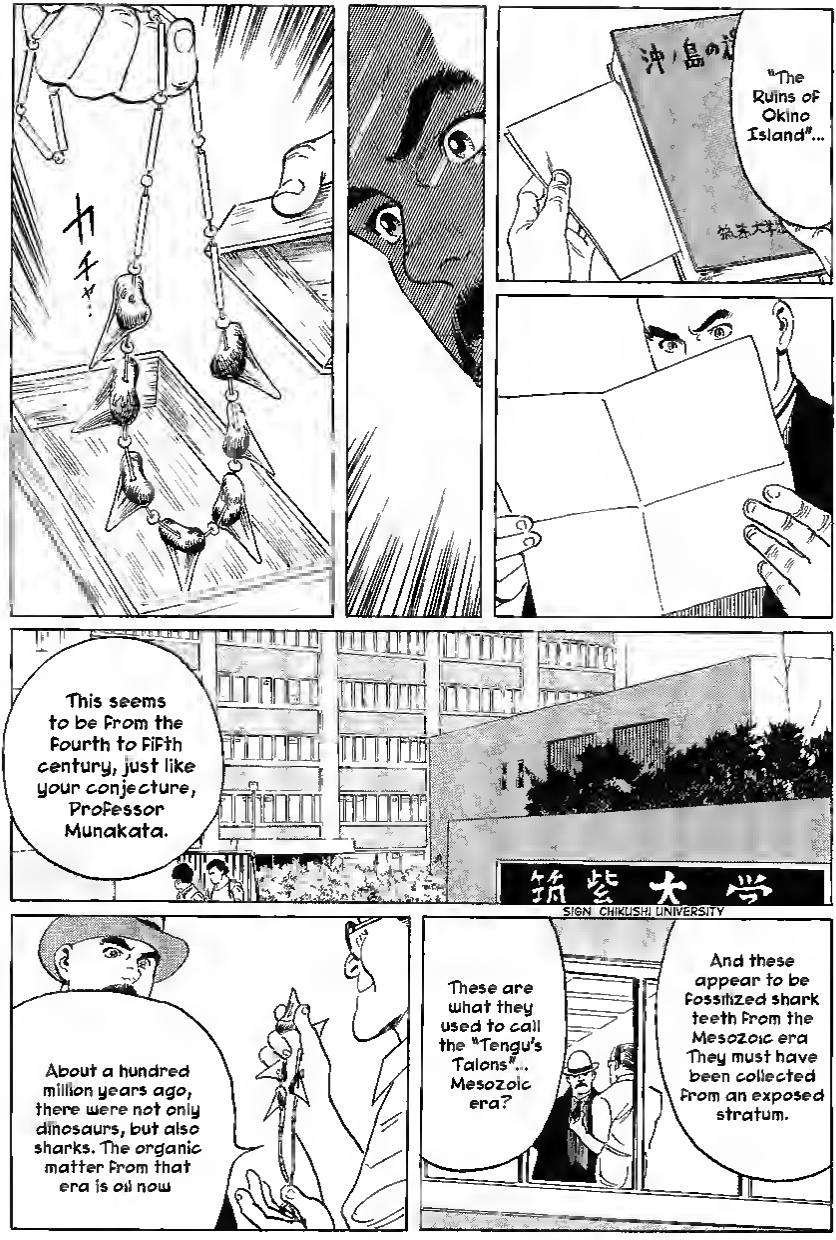


That was Mr Munakata Tsunemichi. He went surf-fishing that night.
I don't believe it! The priest of the shrine...
L... LET ME GO, BRO-THER!
Auxiliary to Munakata Grand Shrine Amateru Hoakari Shrine
Yes, yes. Sorry if I'm late, I had been travelling.
Uncle Tadakusu!
Where's my brother?

Mother, the waves were still that night, and Father would not just slip on a rock!
He must have hit the back of his head with a rock. There's a scar there, but the police autopsy says that he drowned...
Did he have any fishing buddies?
He said he was going night-fishing, and we discovered him the next morning.

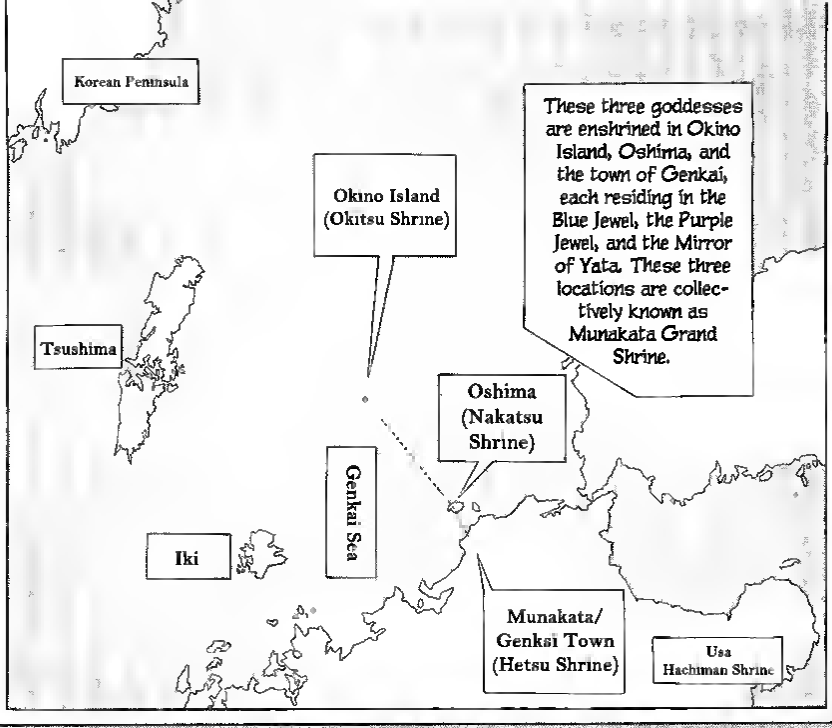

He usually went with Yasu...
Taki! Watch your words!
We will have to pack this up eventually. With no heir to the priesthood, we cannot stay here much longer...
THE SEA ROAD
HAYATO AND THE FISHER FOLK
MYTHS OF FISHERS
THE BIRTH OF AMATERASU
NEW RESEARCH ON JAPANESE MYTHOLOGY
HANTWA AND ANCIENT IMAGES
CONSIDERING THE KOFUN ERA FROM SARCOPHAGI
I have always felt remorseful about my brother, my dear sister-in-law...
Heir to the priesthood...
There were so many books he left behind. I was hoping you could take them in his memory.

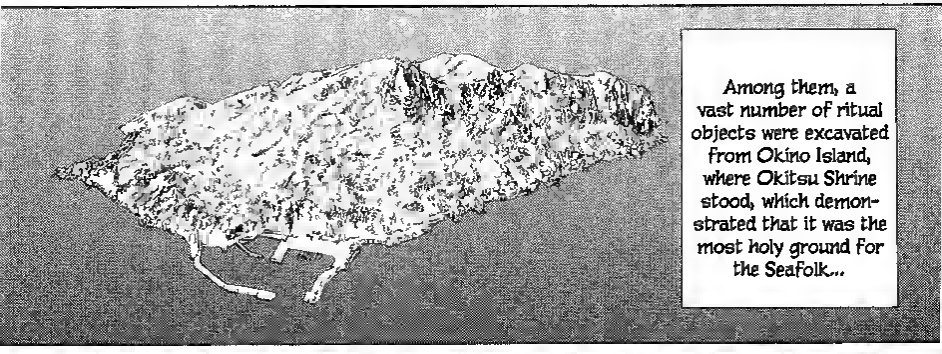
Being the easygoing younger son, the priesthood was not for me, and there was much I wanted to research
So my brother accepted the inheritance, as much as it was imposed upon him...
When the previous priest, my father, was about to decide which of us to leave the shrine to, it was I who ran away to the university in Tokyo.
But he may have had more research and studies he wanted to conduct than me... So I always wanted to apologize to him!
SIGN: THE RUINS OF OKINO ISLAND
I figured it was something important.. He left it on his desk that night
..Oh, that reminds me, there's something I was meaning to show you...

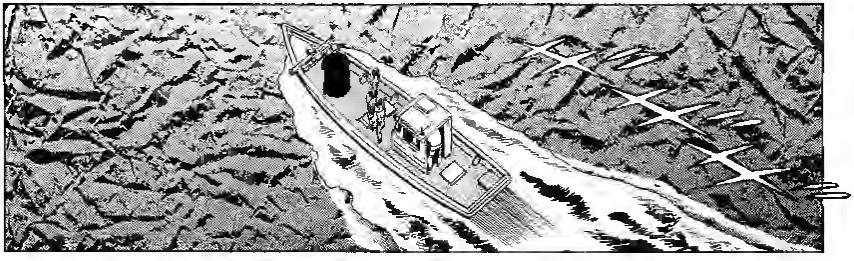

カチャ…
"The Ruins of Okino Island"...
This seems to be from the Fourth to Fifth century, just like your conjecture, Professor Munakata.
筑紫大学
SIGN: CHIKUSHI UNIVERSITY
About a hundred million years ago, there were not only dinosaurs, but also sharks. The organic matter from that era is oil now
These are what they used to call the "Tengu's Talons"... Mesozoic era?
And these appear to be fossilized shark teeth from the Mesozoic era. They must have been collected from an exposed stratum.

Those look like some delicious beakfish.. I take it you're Mr. Yasu?
I'm Munakata Tsunemichi's brother. I hear my brother would often go fishing with you...
W-W.. What..?
I would like to go to Okino Island, like my brother...
Y...You're Reverend Munakata's..? You have my condolences...
You've turned pale. That was a leading statement to confirm that my brother was using fishing as an excuse to go to Okino Island. I want to go there for my own research.

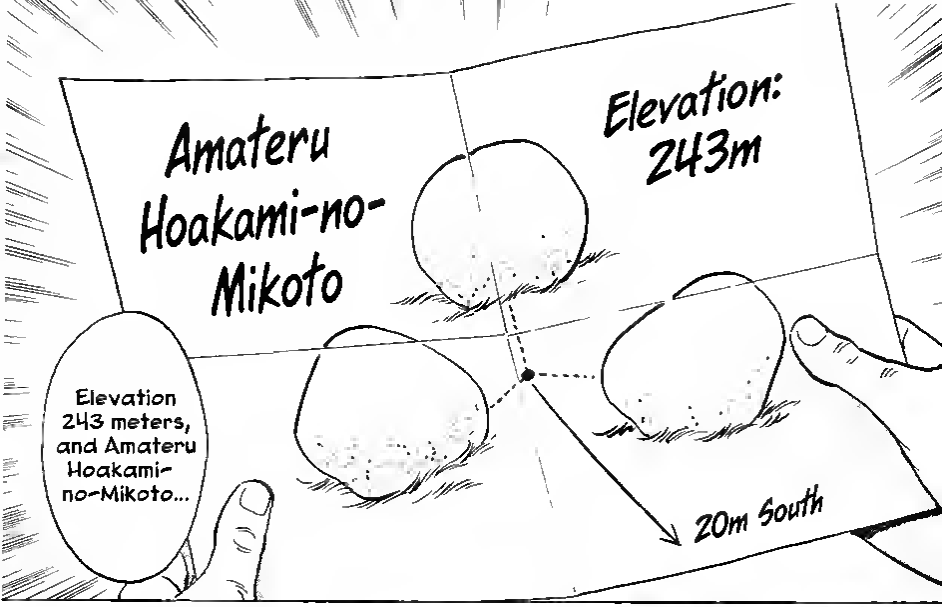
If you're going, we're going with you, Uncle!
The coast of North Kyushu, which looks out upon the Genkai Sea to Korea and China, was the base for the oceanic people called the Seafolk.
They are largely divided into three clans: the Azumi Clan, the Sumiyoshi Clan, and the Munakata Clan.
According to Japanese mythology, the sun goddess Amaterasu confronted her brother Susano'o in the divination ritual on Takamano Plains.
In that ritual, Amaterasu birthed three goddesses from Susano'o's sword, the eldest of which was Ichikishimahime. They are known as the Three Goddesses of Munakata.

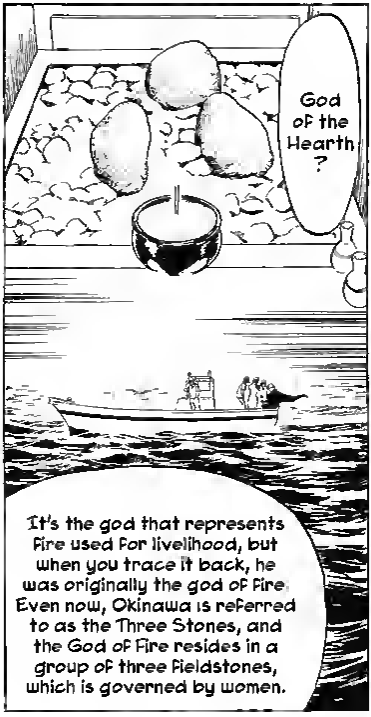

Korean Peninsula
These three goddesses are enshrined in Okino Island, Oshima, and the town of Genkai, each residing in the Blue Jewel, the Purple Jewel, and the Mirror of Yata. These three locations are collectively known as Munakata Grand Shrine.
Okino Island (Okitsu Shrine)
Tsushima
Oshima (Nakatsu Shrine)
Genkai Sea
Iki
Munakata/ Genkai Town (Hetsu Shrine)
Usa Hachiman Shrine

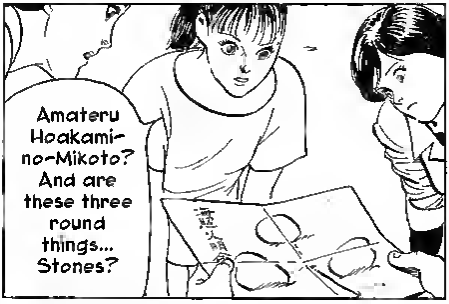

Among them, a vast number of ritual objects were excavated from Okino Island, where Okitsu Shrine stood, which demonstrated that it was the most holy ground for the Seafolk...

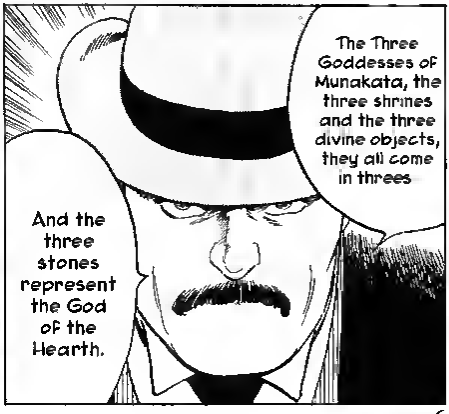


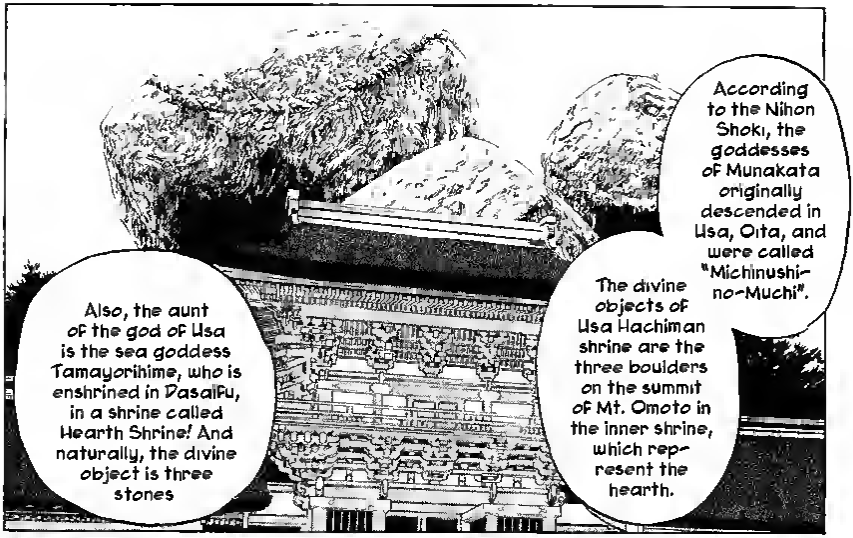
He did always teach us to have hearts as pure as goddesses ...
Tagiri, Itsuki, Taki, my brother named you after the three god-desses.
It's just...
Don't cry, Taki!
Whatever it is my brother was trying to do... I will accomplish it!
Then this is all we have to go on...
ONLY TWICE, BUT HE NEVER TOLD ME ANY DETAILS ...
Mr. Yasu, did my brother ever say anything about Okino Island?

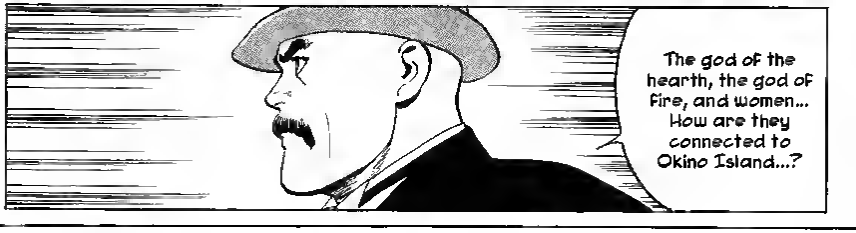

Amateru Hoakami-no-Mikoto
Elevation: 243m
20m South
Elevation 243 meters, and Amateru Hoakami-no-Mikoto...

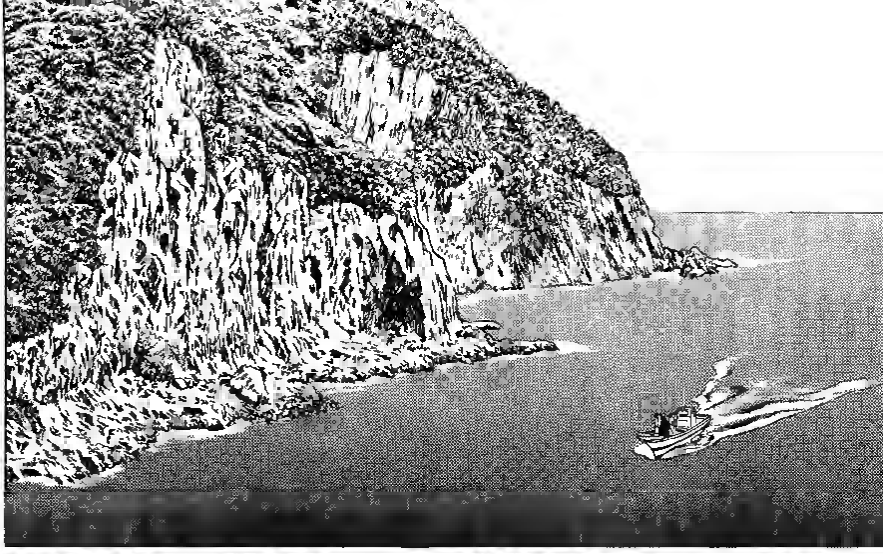

God of the Hearth?
It's the god that represents fire used for livelihood, but when you trace it back, he was originally the god of fire. Even now, Okinawa is referred to as the Three Stones, and the God of Fire resides in a group of three fieldstones, which is governed by women.

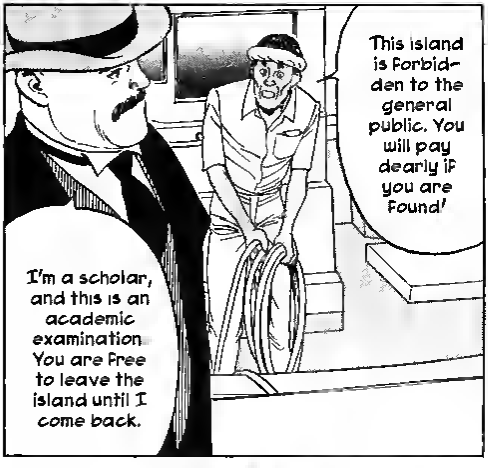

Amateru Hoakami-no-Mikoto? And are these three round things... Stones?

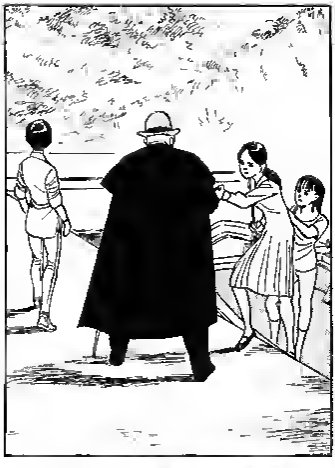

The Three Goddesses of Munakata, the three shrines and the three divine objects, they all come in threes
And the three stones represent the God of the Hearth.

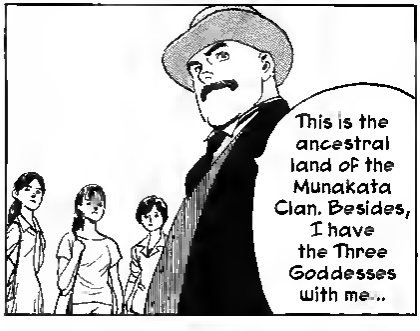

According to the Nihon Shoki, the goddesses of Munakata originally descended in Usa, Oita, and were called "Michinushi-no-Muchi".
The divine objects of Usa Hachiman shrine are the three boulders on the summit of Mt. Omoto in the inner shrine, which represent the hearth.
Also, the aunt of the god of Usa is the sea goddess Tamayorihime, who is enshrined in Dasaifu, in a shrine called Hearth Shrine! And naturally, the divine object is three stones

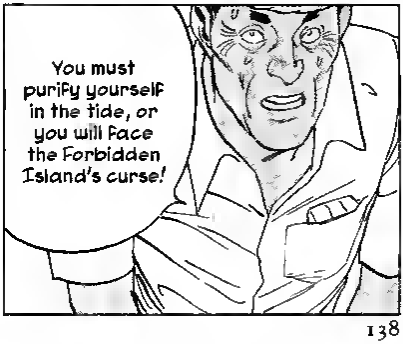

The god of the hearth, the god of fire, and women... How are they connected to Okino Island...?

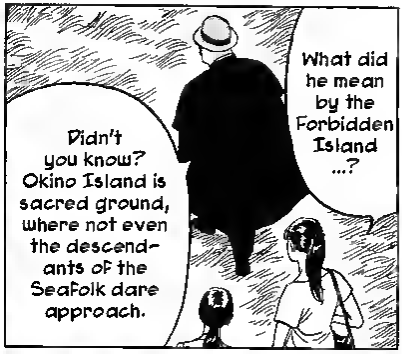


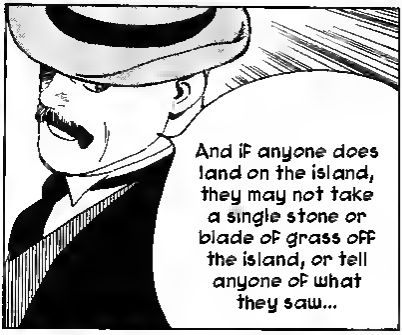

This island is forbidden to the general public. You will pay dearly if you are found!
I'm a scholar, and this is an academic examination. You are free to leave the island until I come back.

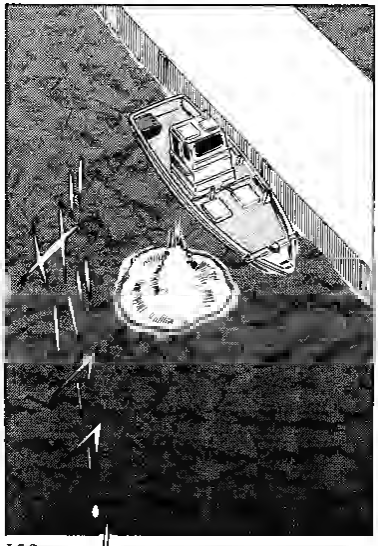



This is the ancestral land of the Munakata Clan. Besides, I have the Three Goddesses with me...

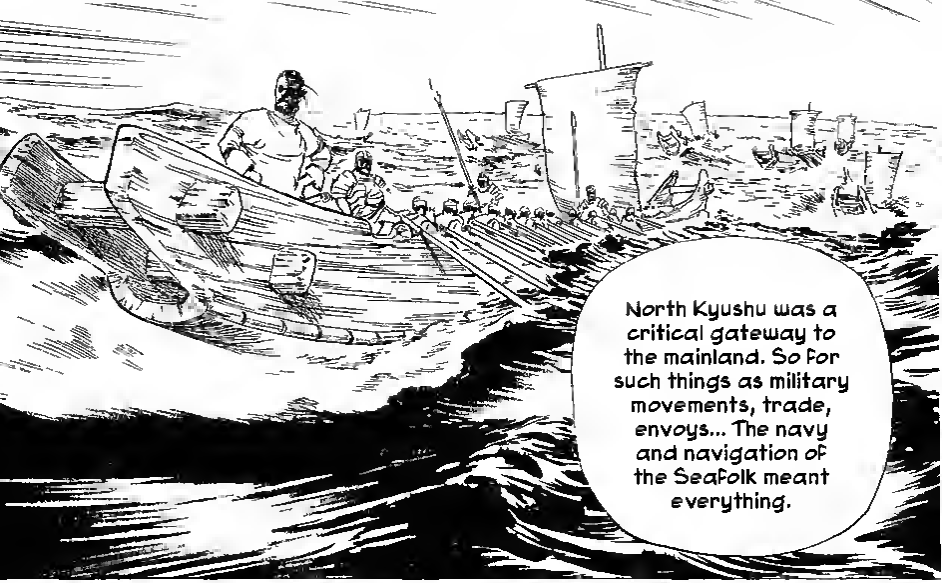

You must purify yourself in the tide, or you will face the Forbidden Island's curse!


What did he mean by the Forbidden Island ...?
Didn't you know? Okino Island is sacred ground, where not even the descendants of the SeaFolk dare approach.

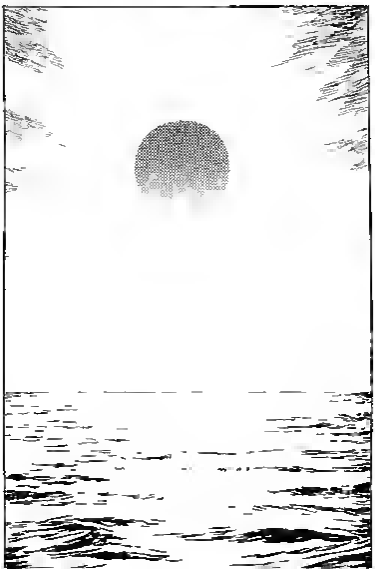

And if anyone does land on the island, they may not take a single stone or blade of grass off the island, or tell anyone of what they saw...



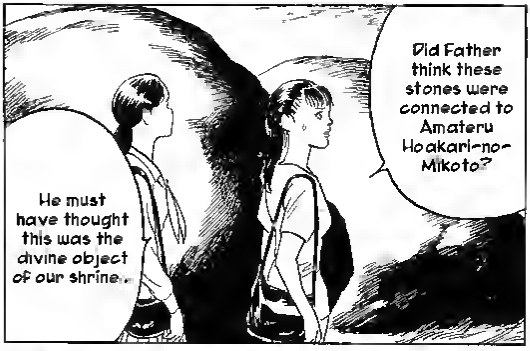
Okino Island was excavated after the war, and they found so many artifacts, that they called it the Shosoin of the Sea.
What is interesting is that along with the ritual objects, they unearthed a number of mirrors, armor, and broken swords.
Munakata Grand Shrine
Okitsu Shrine
It would seem that a ritual re-enactment of Amaterasu and Susano'o's Divination ritual was conducted on this island.
And based on the artifacts' ages, they say that this ritual was held on a natural scale.
From the Fourth to the Ninth Century, the Yamato court required the power of the Seafolk!

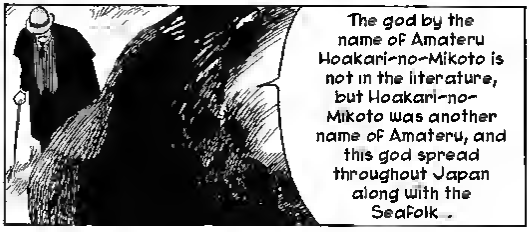

North Kyushu was a critical gateway to the mainland. So for such things as military movements, trade, envoys... The navy and navigation of the Seafolk meant everything.

Not only of the Three Goddesses of Munakata, but even the Imperial Progenitor Amaterasu...
And as they were compiling the mythology of Japan at the time, they came to incorporate the myths of the Seafolk...



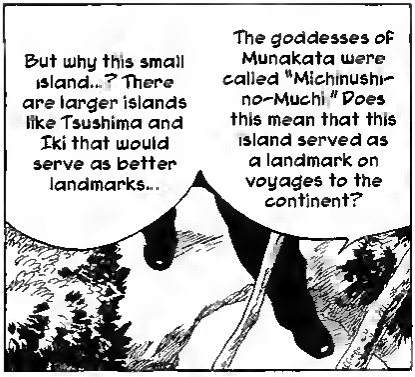
Some say that Amaterasu is Amateru... that Amateru, God of the Seafolk, was her prototype...!
Tsushima Amateru Shrine

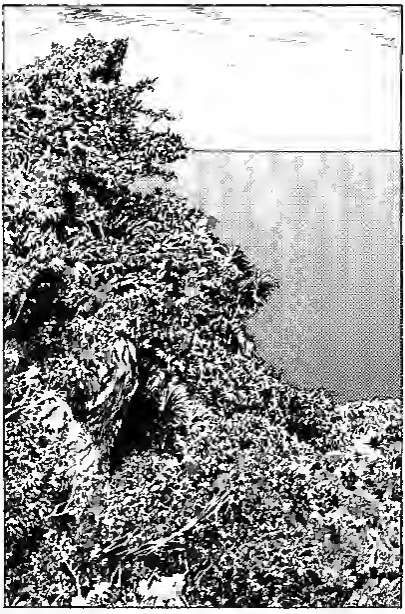

Did Father think these stones were connected to Amateru Hoakari-no-Mikoto?
He must have thought this was the divine object of our shrine.


The god by the name of Amateru Hoakari-no-Mikoto is not in the literature, but Hoakari-no-Mikoto was another name of Amateru, and this god spread throughout Japan along with the Seafolk.

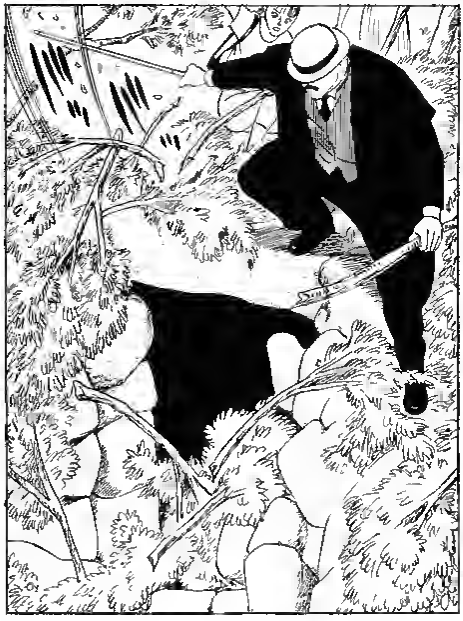
The only place on Okino Island with an elevation of 243 meters is the island's summit. And it turns out there are three stones here.

There seems to be a rather deep hole at the center, covered by earth and sand. There seem to be some signs of burning...
If Amateru Hoakari-no-Mikoto is the prototype for Amaterasu, then these three stones naturally her daughters, the Three Goddesses of Munakata...
So is Hoatari-no-Mikoto at the center of the God of the Hearth...?
This map says to go twenty meters South from the center of the three stones. What did he find there...?
Where are you going?
Hmm...

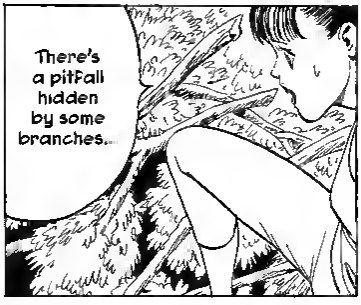

But why this small island...? There are larger islands like Tsushima and Iki that would serve as better landmarks...
The goddesses of Munakata were called "Michinushi-no-Muchi." Does this mean that this island served as a landmark on voyages to the continent?



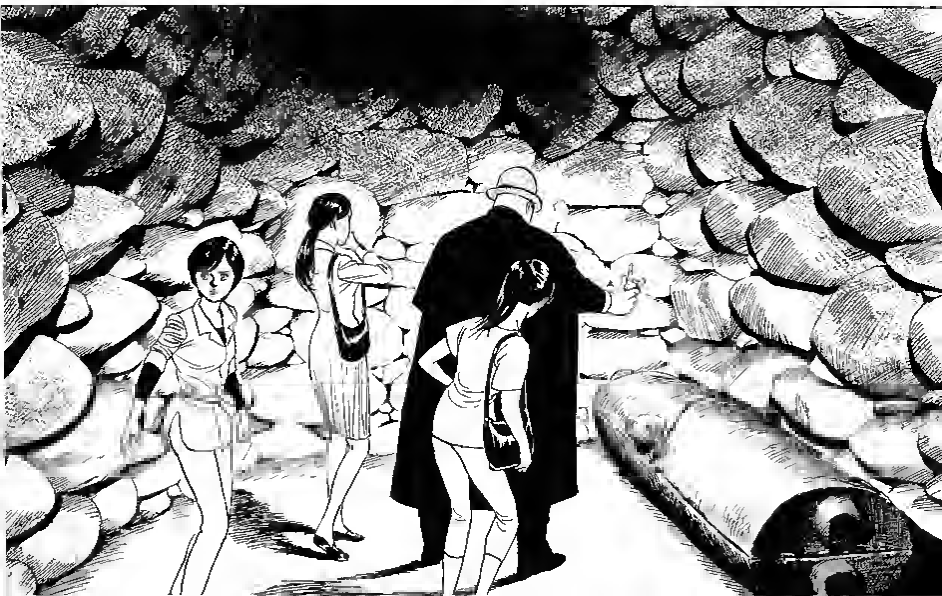
Is there something on this island that was even important to the Imperial Court...?

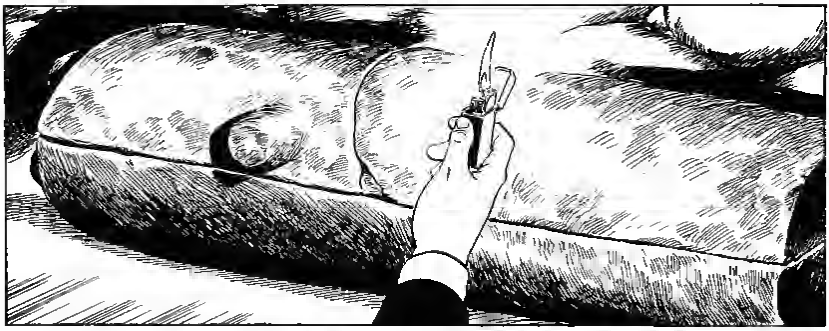


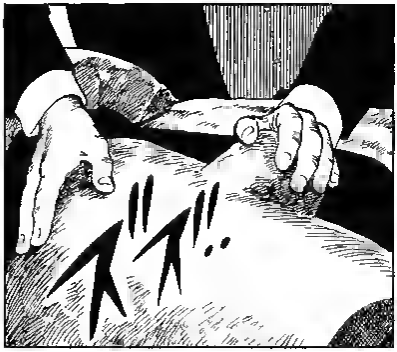
Are you alright, Itsuki?
AH!

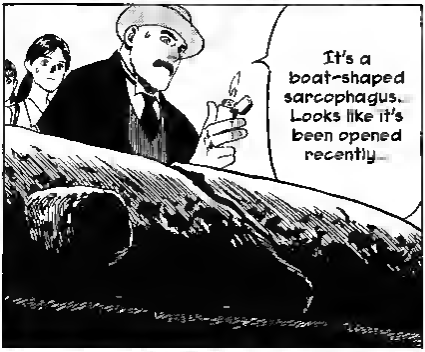

There's a pitfall hidden by some branches..

*ISLAND TOMB = THE SEAFOLK USED TO BUILD MASS GRAVES ON ISLANDS, AND THEY WERE LATER INFLUENCED BY KOFUN CIVILIZATION AND BEGAN BUILDING BURIAL MOUNDS ON TOP OF THE ISLANDS





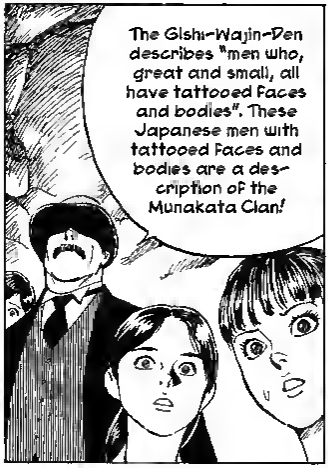


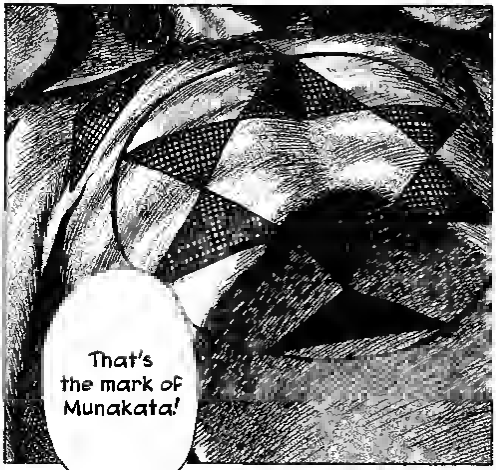

It's a boat-shaped sarcophagus. Looks like it's been opened recently...

AHH...

A... Are those tattoos ...?

...It's mummified ...!?

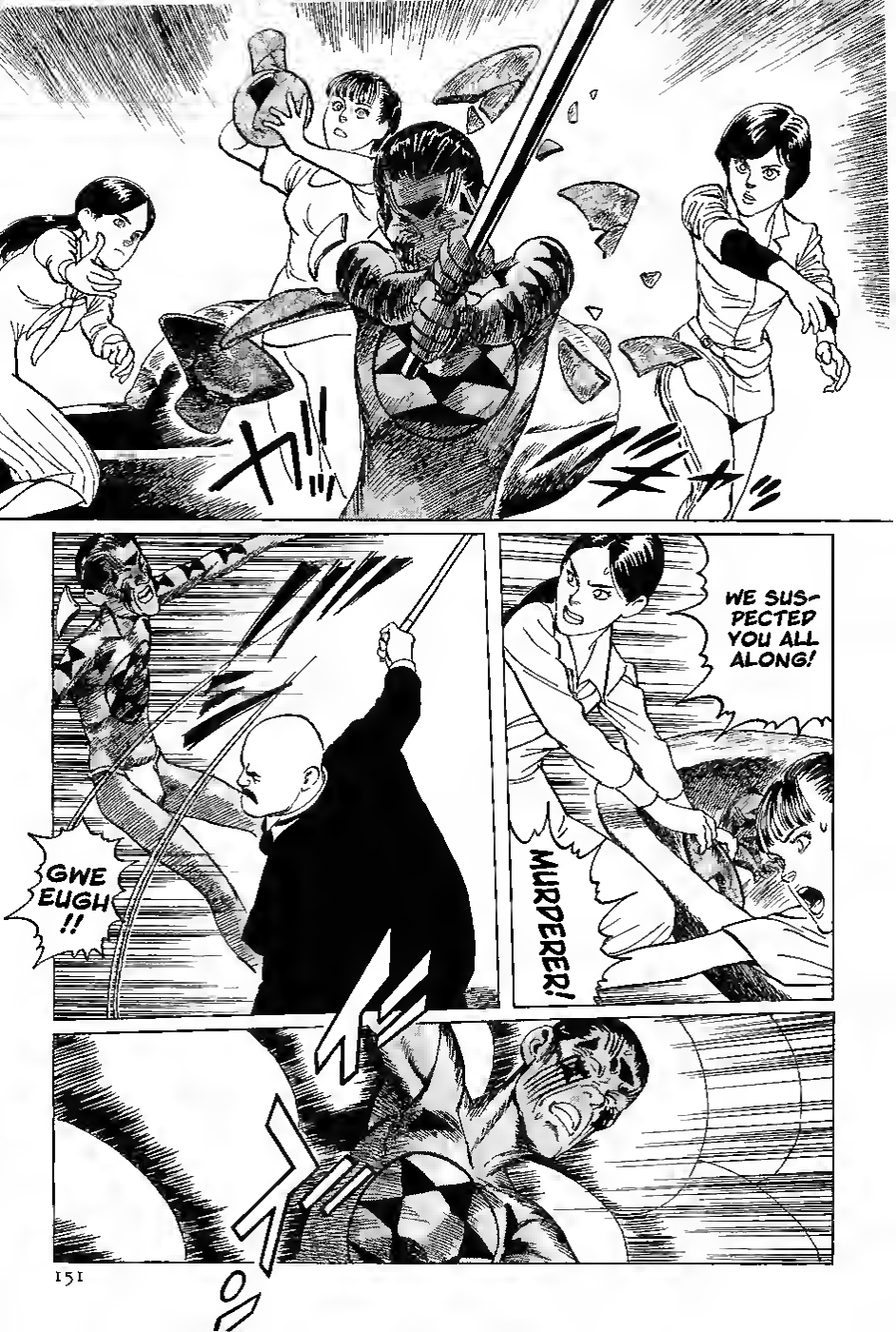

The Gishi-Wajin-Den describes "men who, great and small, all have tattooed faces and bodies". These Japanese men with tattooed faces and bodies are a description of the Munakata Clan!


That's the mark of Munakata!

And why is he mummified... How did he desiccate so badly...?
This must be the corpse of their chief, "Munakata-no-Kimi".
IT CAN'T BE...

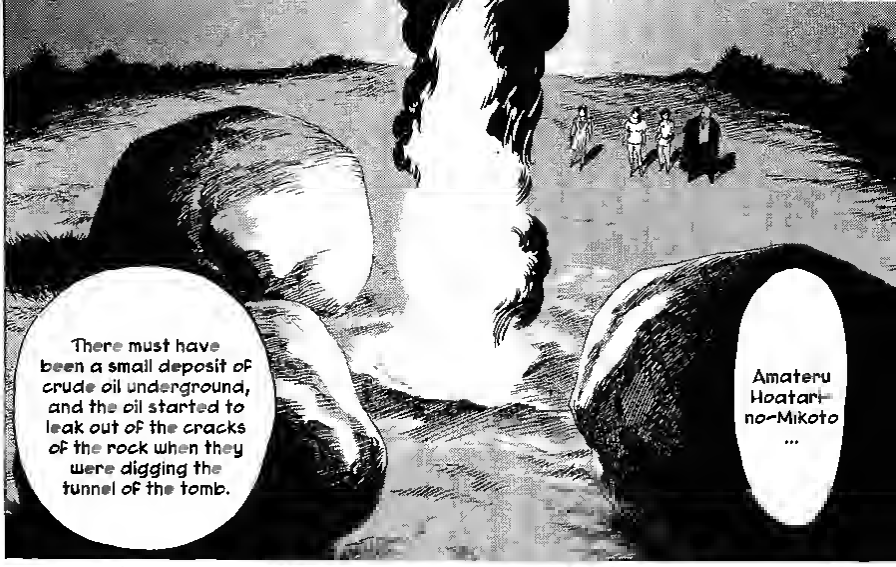
AIIIEEEEEEEEEE!
URRRGH...
ZZZ

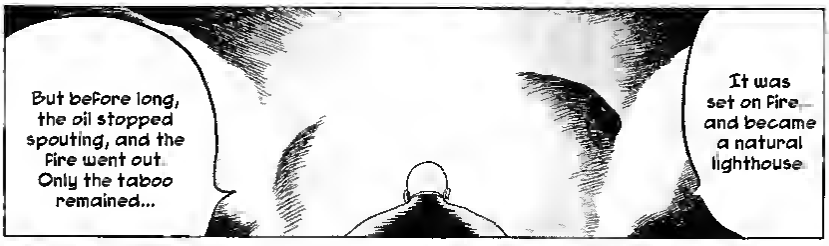
YET REVEREND MUNAKATA TOOK THIS FOR HIS RESEARCH!
"SPEAK NOT OF WHAT YOU SAW ON THIS FORBIDDEN ISLE! TAKE NOTHING FROM THE ISLE!"
...So that's why you killed my brother!
NO MATTER HOW MANY TIMES I TOLD HIM TO RETURN IT, HE WOULD NOT!
IT WAS THE CURSE! THOSE WHO BREAK THE LAW DESERVE TO BE SLAIN!!

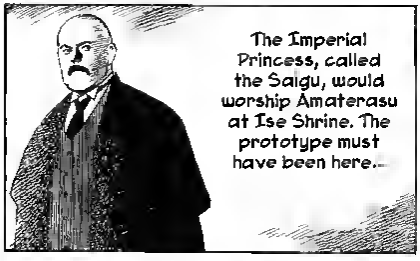

WE SUSPECTED YOU ALL ALONG!
MURDERER!
GWE EUGH !!

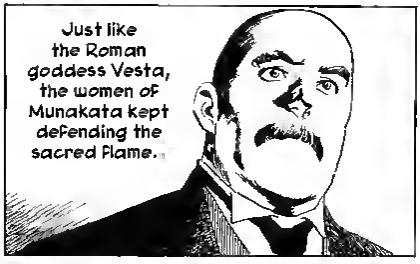
LOOK OUT! RUN!!
GYAA AAAH HHHH HHHH HH!

ドドド
ドン
It's the oil from the Mesozoic strata...
O... OIL!?

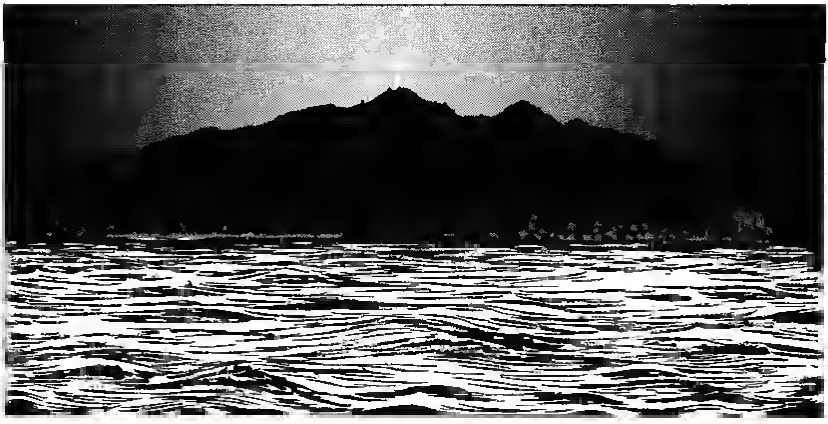

There must have been a small deposit of crude oil underground, and the oil started to leak out of the cracks of the rock when they were digging the tunnel of the tomb.
Amateru Hoatari-no-Mikoto ...

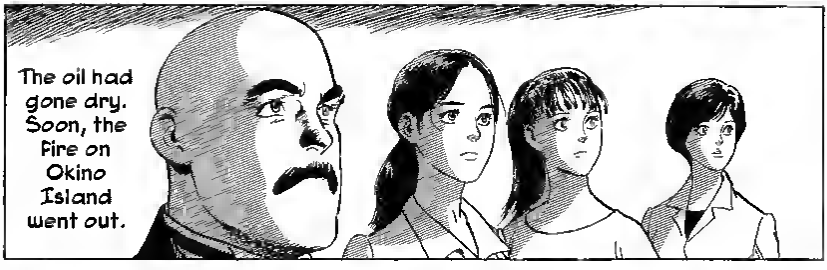

But before long, the oil stopped spouting, and the fire went out. Only the taboo remained...
It was set on fire... and became a natural lighthouse.


The Imperial Princess, called the Saigu, would worship Amaterasu at Ise Shrine. The prototype must have been here...


Just like the Roman goddess Vesta, the women of Munakata kept defending the sacred flame...

The holy island maidens ...



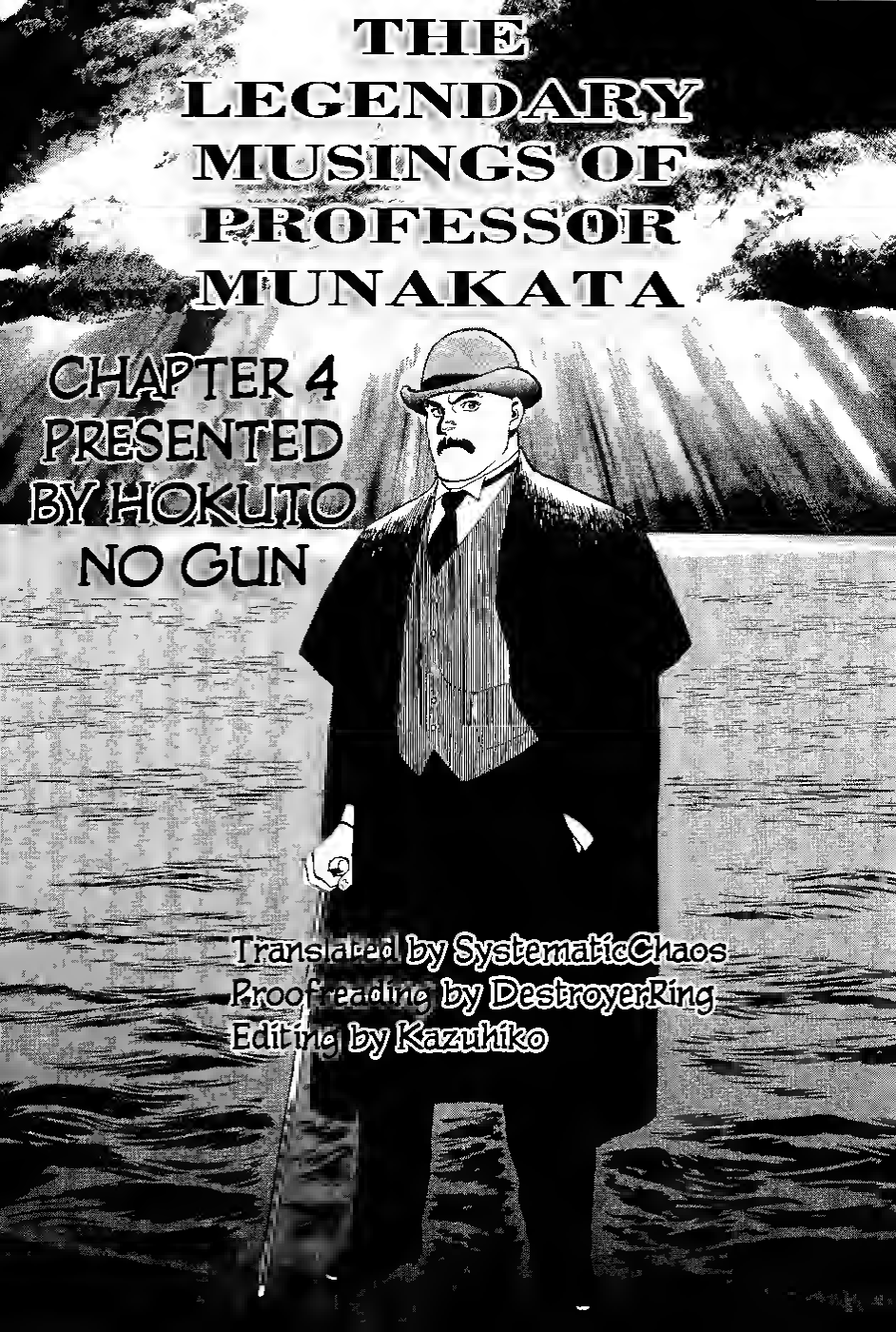

The oil had gone dry. Soon, the fire on Okino Island went out.

After a transient moment of brightness, Munakata's sea was once again closed to the darkness of history...

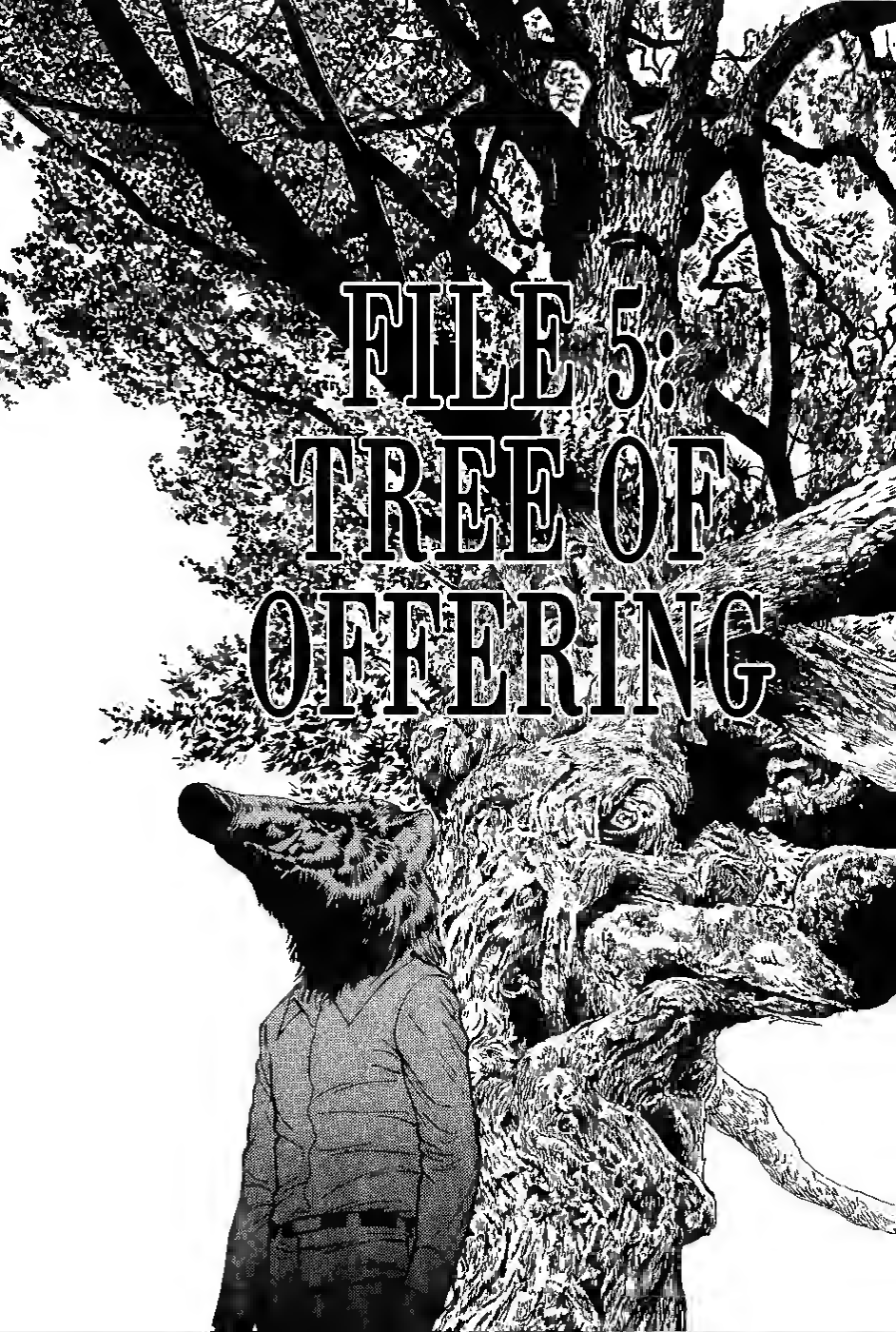
THE LEGENDARY MUSINGS OF PROFESSOR MUNAKATA

CHAPTER 4

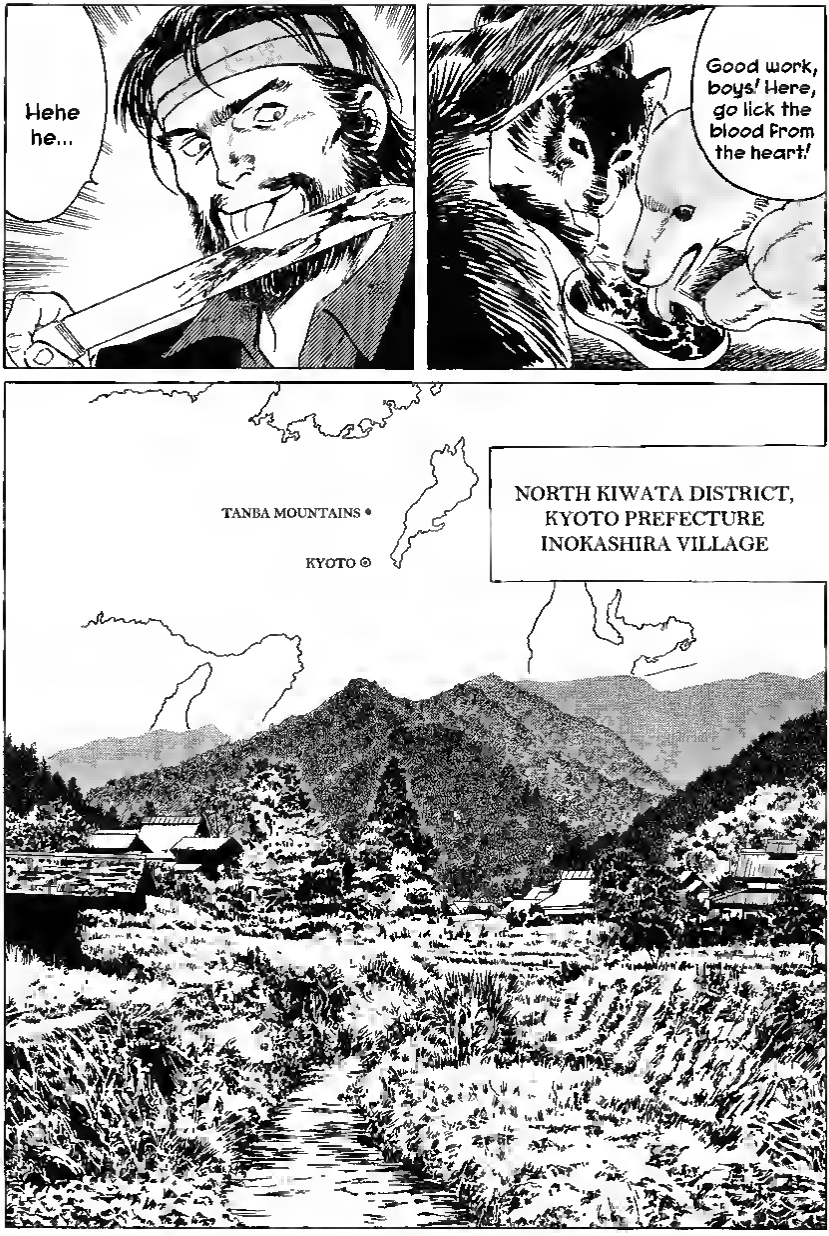
PRESENTED BY HOKUTO NO GUN

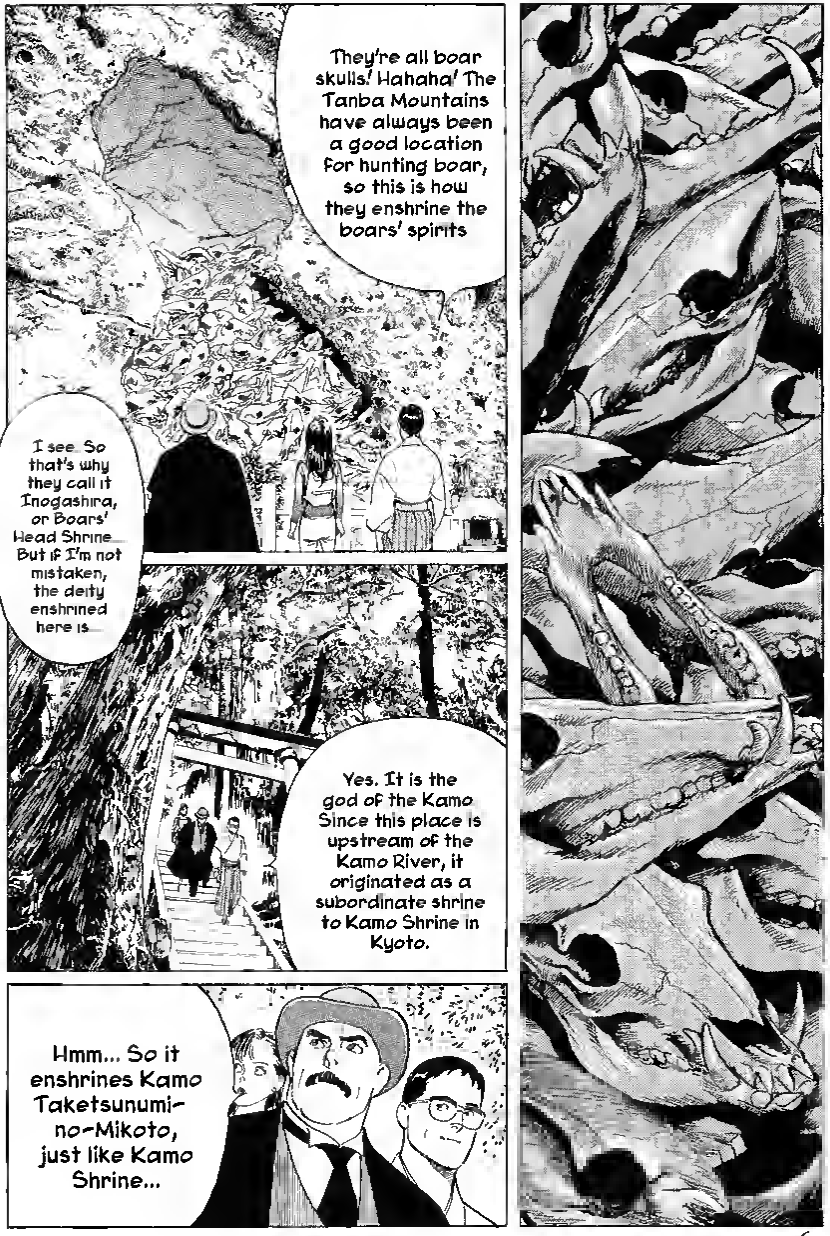


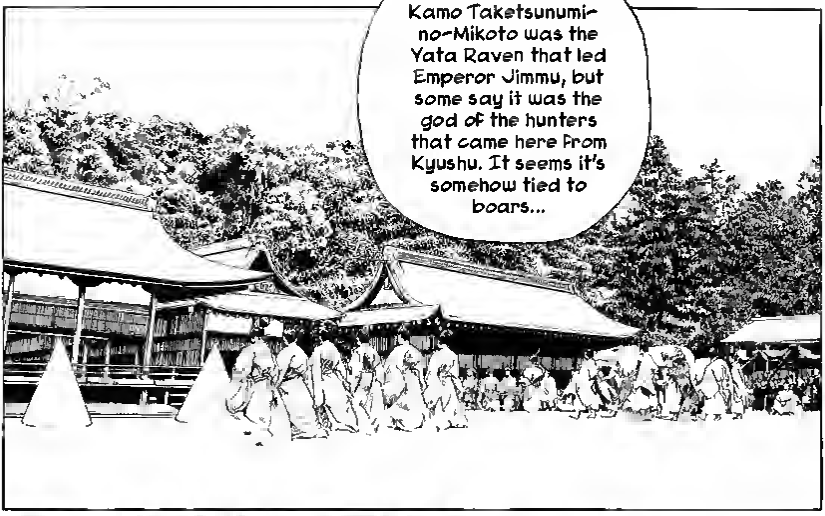
Translated by SystematicChaos
Proofreading by DestroyerRing
Editing by Kazuhiko


FILE 5:
TREE OF
OFFERING

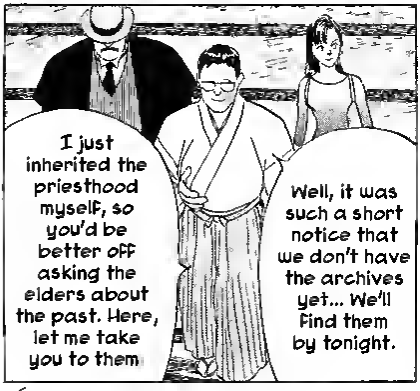
That direction... Tch. That's Shinzo.

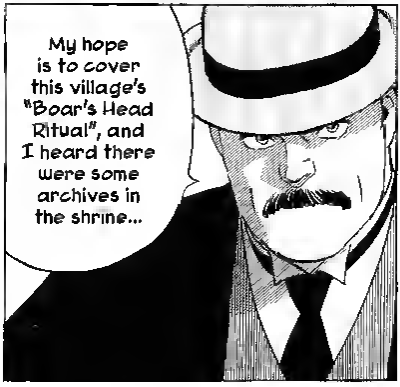

Hehe he...
Good work, boys! Here, go lick the blood from the heart!
TANBA MOUNTAINS
KYOTO
NORTH KIWATA DISTRICT, KYOTO PREFECTURE INOKASHIRA VILLAGE

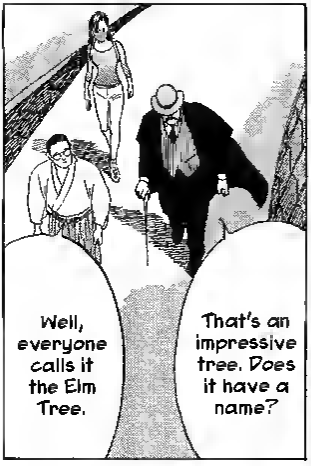

They're all boar skulls! Hahaha! The Tanba Mountains have always been a good location for hunting boar, so this is how they enshrine the boars' spirits
I see. So that's why they call it Inogashira, or Boars' Head Shrine. But if I'm not mistaken, the deity enshrined here is...
Yes. It is the god of the Kamo. Since this place is upstream of the Kamo River, it originated as a subordinate shrine to Kamo Shrine in Kyoto.
Hmm... So it enshrines Kamo Taketsunumi-no-Mikoto, just like Kamo Shrine...

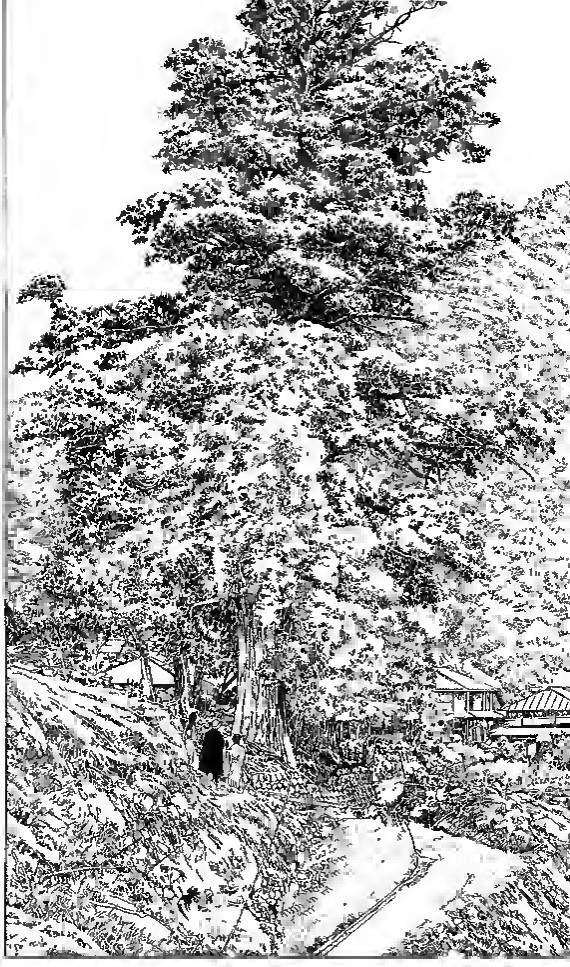

Kamo Taketsunumi-no-Mikoto was the Yata Raven that led Emperor Jimmu, but some say it was the god of the hunters that came here from Kyushu. It seems it's somehow tied to boars...

The truth is, I promised Miss Ike's magazine company that I would write an annual column on a Zodiac-based theme.
And this is the year of the Boar!
The professor wouldn't write anything without forcing me to come along to collect data.

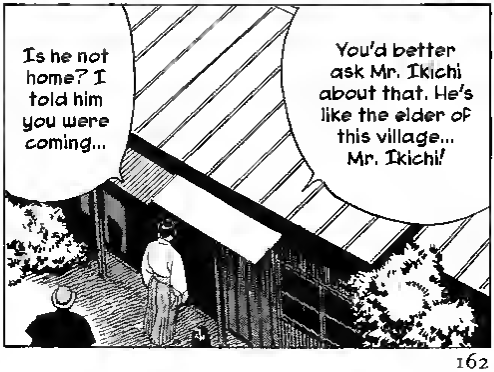

I just inherited the priesthood myself, so you'd be better off asking the elders about the past. Here, let me take you to them
Well, it was such a short notice that we don't have the archives yet... We'll find them by tonight.


My hope is to cover this village's "Boar's Head Ritual", and I heard there were some archives in the shrine...


That's an impressive tree. Does it have a name?
Well, everyone calls it the Elm Tree.

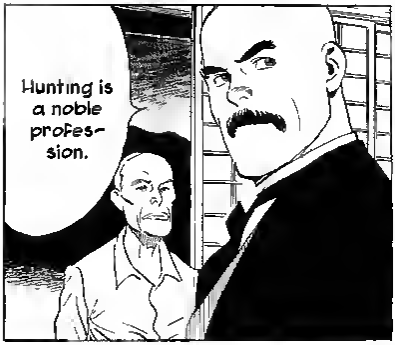


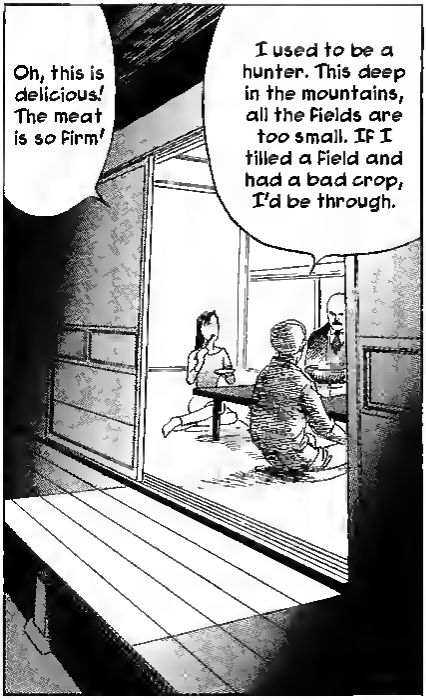
Well, it certainly is an elm. But such a giant tree overlooking the village on sacred ground must have some history...

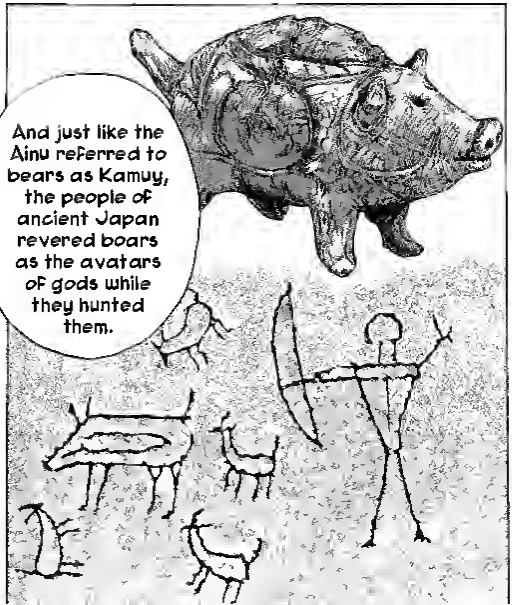

You'd better ask Mr. Ikichi about that. He's like the elder of this village... Mr. Ikichi!
Is he not home? I told him you were coming...

Take it!
Hehe he...
I just finished it off. It'll get you a hefty price when you take it to Kyoto.
Shinzo! That price is simply outrageous!
Mr. Ikichi!
I'll throw in the head as a special deal. Just wait here. Hehe...
You simply can't leave this village without trying this! Hahhahhah!
Boar?
Oh, so this is boar hot pot?

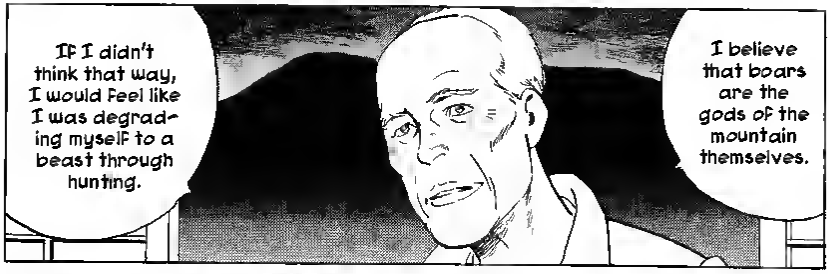
神の山

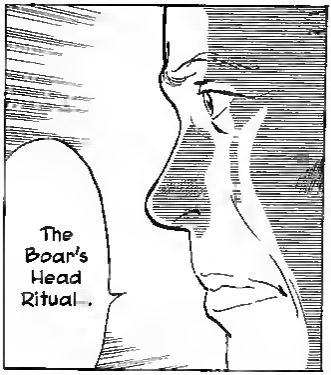

Hunting is a noble profes-sion.

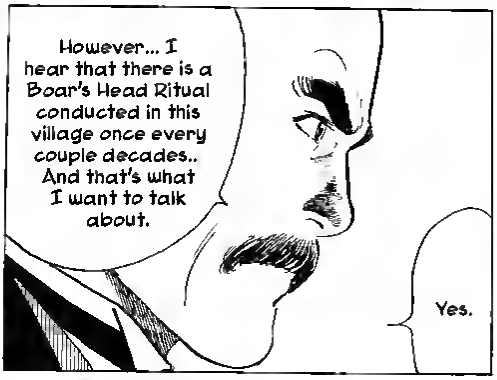

Oh, this is delicious! The meat is so firm!
I used to be a hunter. This deep in the mountains, all the fields are too small. If I tilled a field and had a bad crop, I'd be through.


And just like the Ainu referred to bears as Kamuy, the people of ancient Japan revered boars as the avatars of gods while they hunted them.

The Celts and Gauls of ancient Europe would use the boars they hunted as standards, to boast of their bravery.

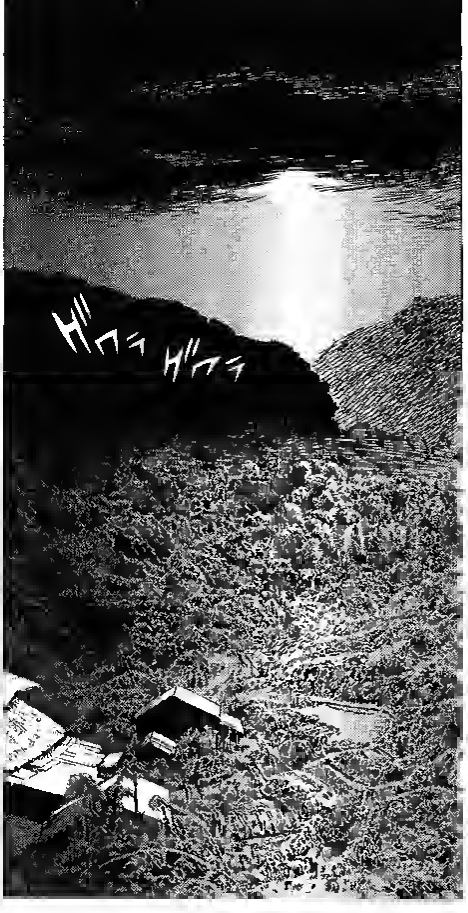

If I didn't think that way, I would feel like I was degrading myself to a beast through hunting.
I believe that boars are the gods of the mountain themselves.


The Boar's Head Ritual...


However... I hear that there is a Boar's Head Ritual conducted in this village once every couple decades.. And that's what I want to talk about.
Yes.

And so, they raced horses with bells on at Kamo Shrine, their riders wearing boars' heads, and the famine passed.
According to the Records of Yamashiro Province, the land was devastated by winds and rain during the reign of Emperor Kinmei, which led to a famine. The cause was divined to be a curse from the god of Kamo...

This famine was recorded in the Nihon Shoki as occurring in the 28th year of Emperor Kinmei's reign: "All the land was flooded, and the people did starve and turn their teeth upon one another."
This means that the famine was so severe, people turned to cannibalism...
I assume that the ancient Kamo Festival conducted during the great famine is in some way connected to this village's Boar's Head Ritual.
And I want you to tell me anything you know of it.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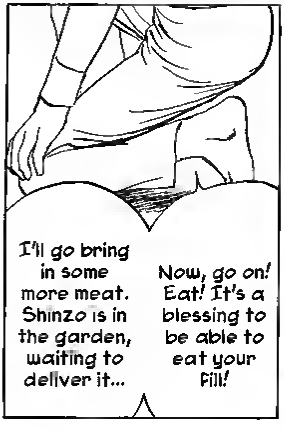
Well... While I have heard of the existence of such a festival...
The last time it was held was during the Tempo years of the Edo Period, over a century ago...

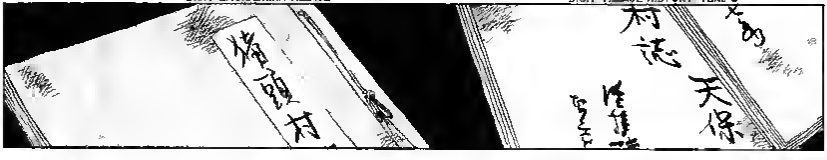
This boar hot pot is really good! You must use the best pork for it!

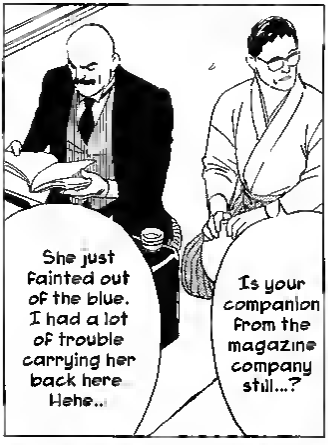

I'll go bring in some more meat. Shinzo is in the garden, waiting to deliver it...
Now, go on! Eat! It's a blessing to be able to eat your fill!

Tempo years ...?

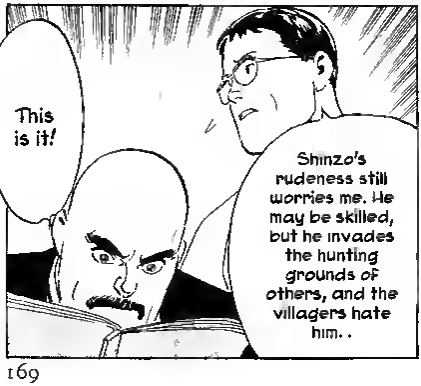
What, you've been eating boar hot pot without knowing what's inside it? I can't believe you...

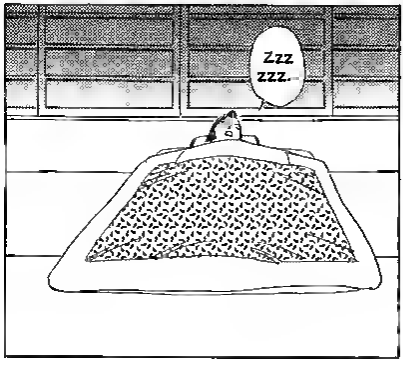
SIGN INOKASHIRA VILLAGE
SIGN VILLAGE HISTORY TEMPO

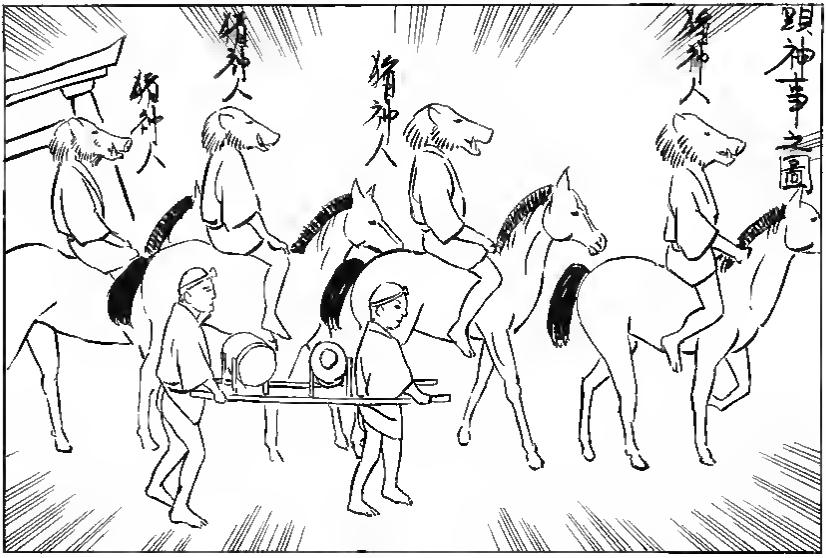


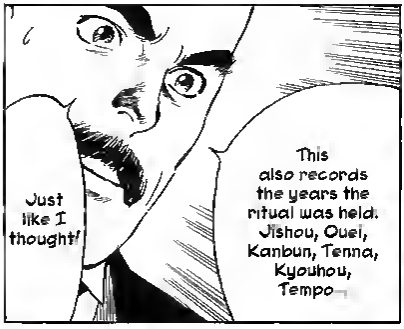

She just fainted out of the blue. I had a lot of trouble carrying her back here Hehe..
Is your companion from the magazine company still...?

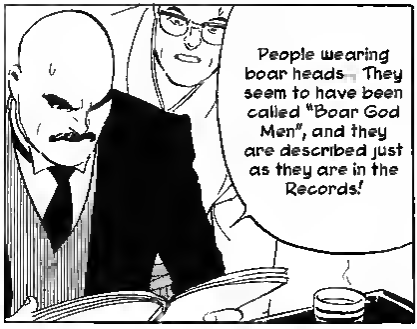
No, no. I thank you.
This was the only place we could offer you to stay...

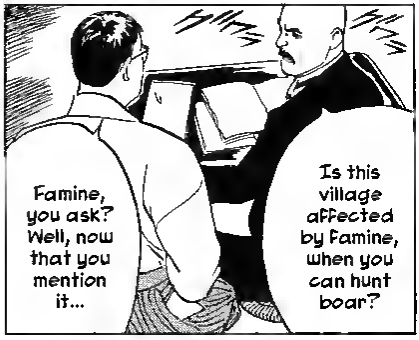

This is it!
Shinzo's rudeness still worries me. He may be skilled, but he invades the hunting grounds of others, and the villagers hate him..


Zzz zzz..


猪神人
猪神人
猪神人
猪神人
頭神事之圖


Just like I thought!
This also records the years the ritual was held. Jishou, Ouei, Kanbun, Tenna, Kyouhou, Tempo


People wearing boar heads. They seem to have been called "Boar God Men", and they are described just as they are in the Records!


Famine, you ask? Well, now that you mention it...
Is this village affected by famine, when you can hunt boar?

These were all immediately after West Japan was stricken with famine!

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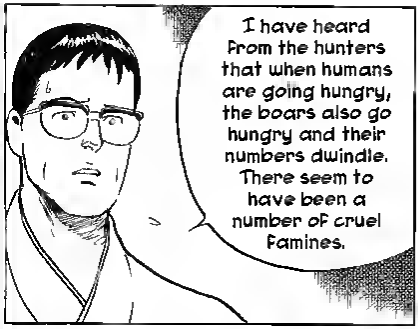
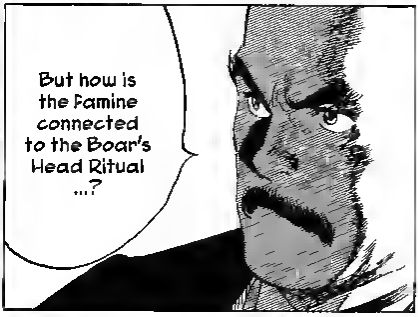
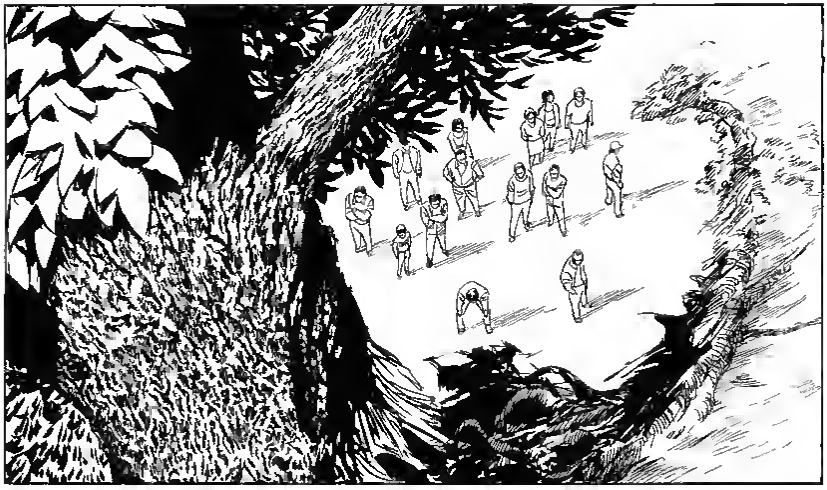
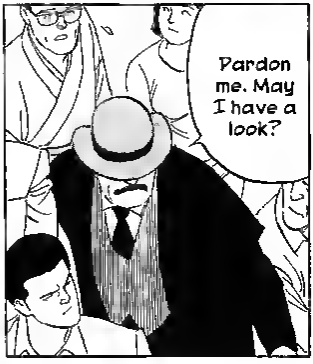
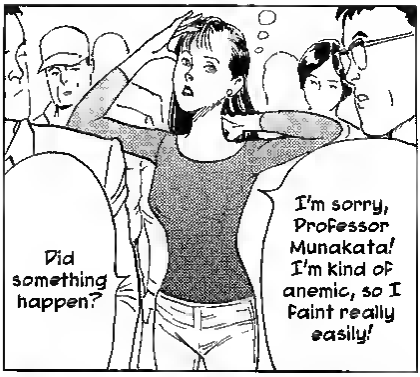

I have heard from the hunters that when humans are going hungry, the boars also go hungry and their numbers dwindle. There seem to have been a number of cruel famines.

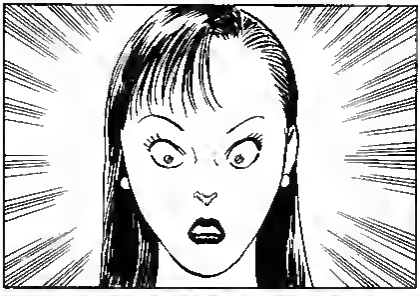

But how is the famine connected to the Boar's Head Ritual ...?

They seem to gradually increase with time. In the oldest records, there are only three...
That's strange. The number of Boar God Men keep increasing..
Huh?
But in the most recent ritual, following the Tempo Famine, the worst in the entire Edo Period, there were well over twenty!
What does this mean...!?

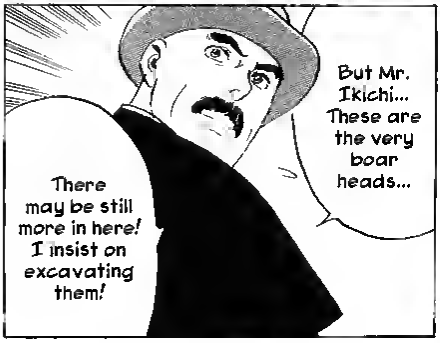



Pardon me. May I have a look?

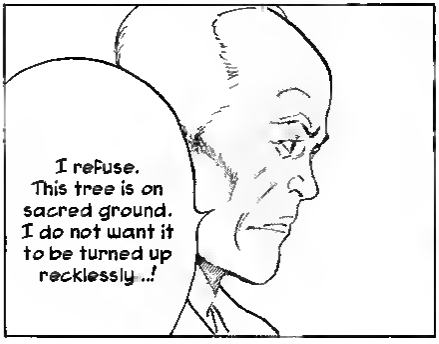

Did something happen?
I'm sorry, Professor Munakata! I'm kind of anemic, so I faint really easily!

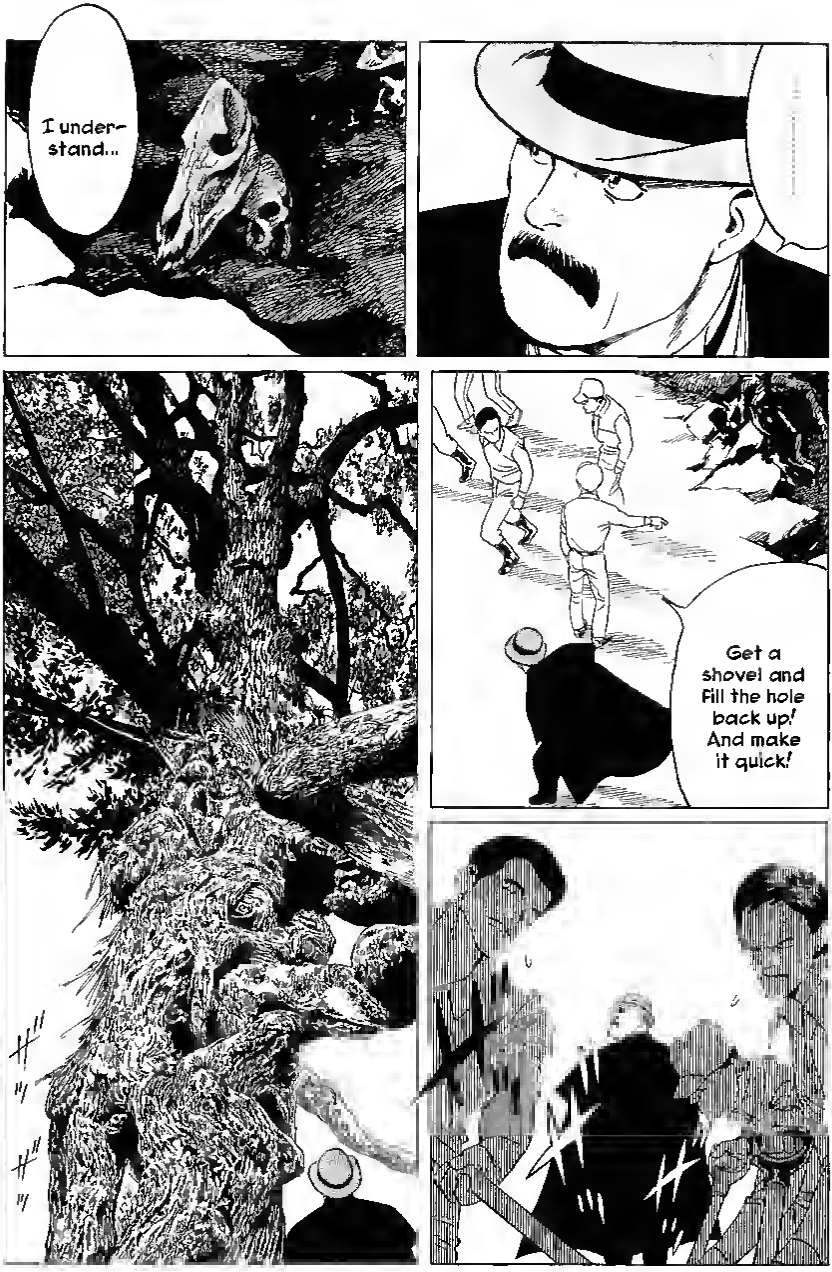


Take her to the shrine office... Goodness gracious!


But Mr. Ikichi... These are the very boar heads...
There may be still more in here! I insist on excavating them!

Professor Munakata, I must ask you to return them.

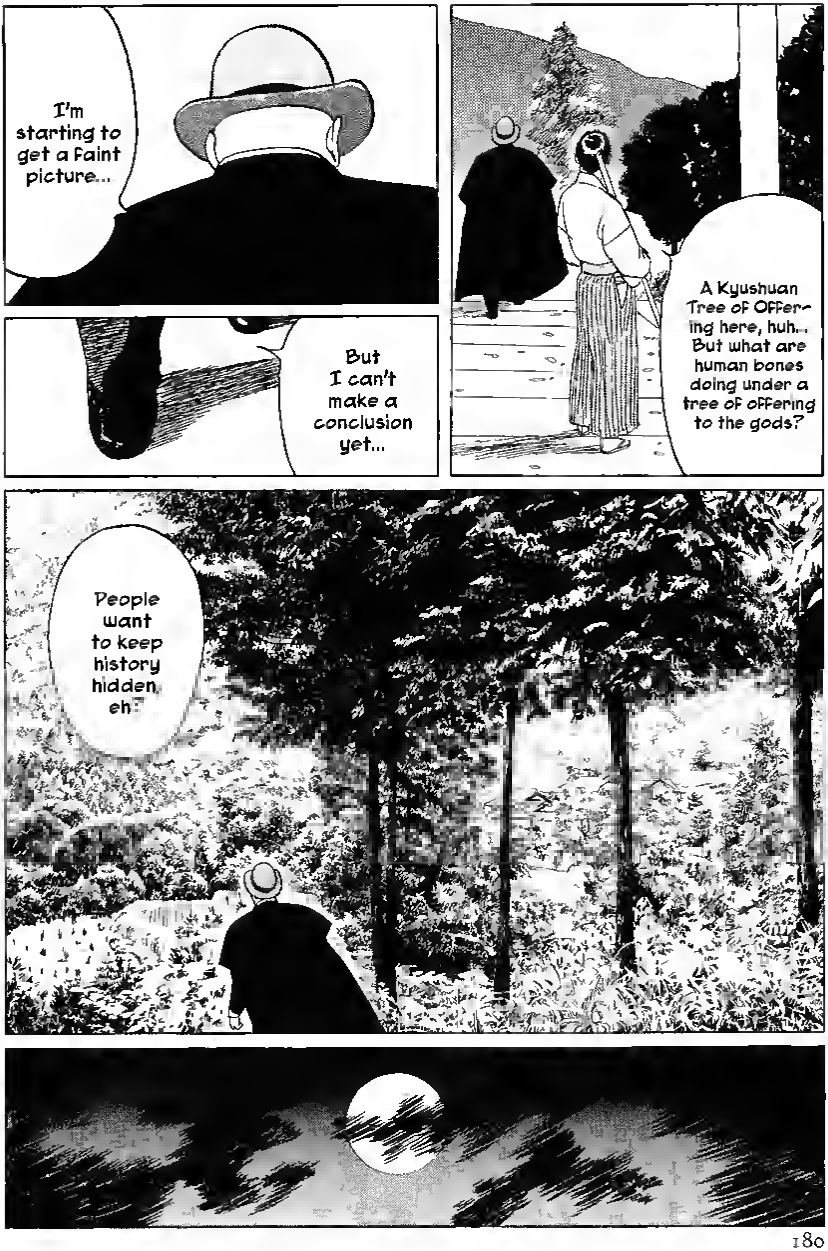

I refuse. This tree is on sacred ground. I do not want it to be turned up recklessly ..!


I under-
stand...
Get a
shovel and
fill the hole
back up!
And make
it quick!

Well, I'm surprised to hear what was under the Elm Tree... It's a shame you couldn't look into it, Professor Munakata.
It's a rotten business. I have a tendency to want to dig everything up without giving thought to others...
...I fear that the tree has either lost its meaning in time, or was renamed intentionally.
That must be difficult. There are some cases where there people want to keep history hidden...
Tree of Offering...?
It was originally not the Elm Tree, but the Tree of Offering!

TL NOTE THE JAPANESE WORD FOR ELM "NIRE", IS SIMILAR TO THE WORD FOR OFFERING, "NIE"

According to the "Origin of Aso Shrine" of Aso, a city in the Kyushu Mountains famous for its boar hunting, the chief priest of the shrine would hang a boar or deer shot with a bow on a tree next to the Aso Shrine Torii gate, offering it to the gods, for every hunt.
And this was called the Tree of Offering
Some sources say that the First emperor Jimmu's Eastern conquest from Kyushu to Kinki was a mythologizing of a migration from Kyushu due to a famine.
And if the hunter tribes of the Kyushu mountains participated in this migration, then Kamo Taketsunumi-no-Mikoto, who followed Jimmu, symbolizes them..
This tells of how the culture and faiths of the hunter tribes were brought to Kinki.

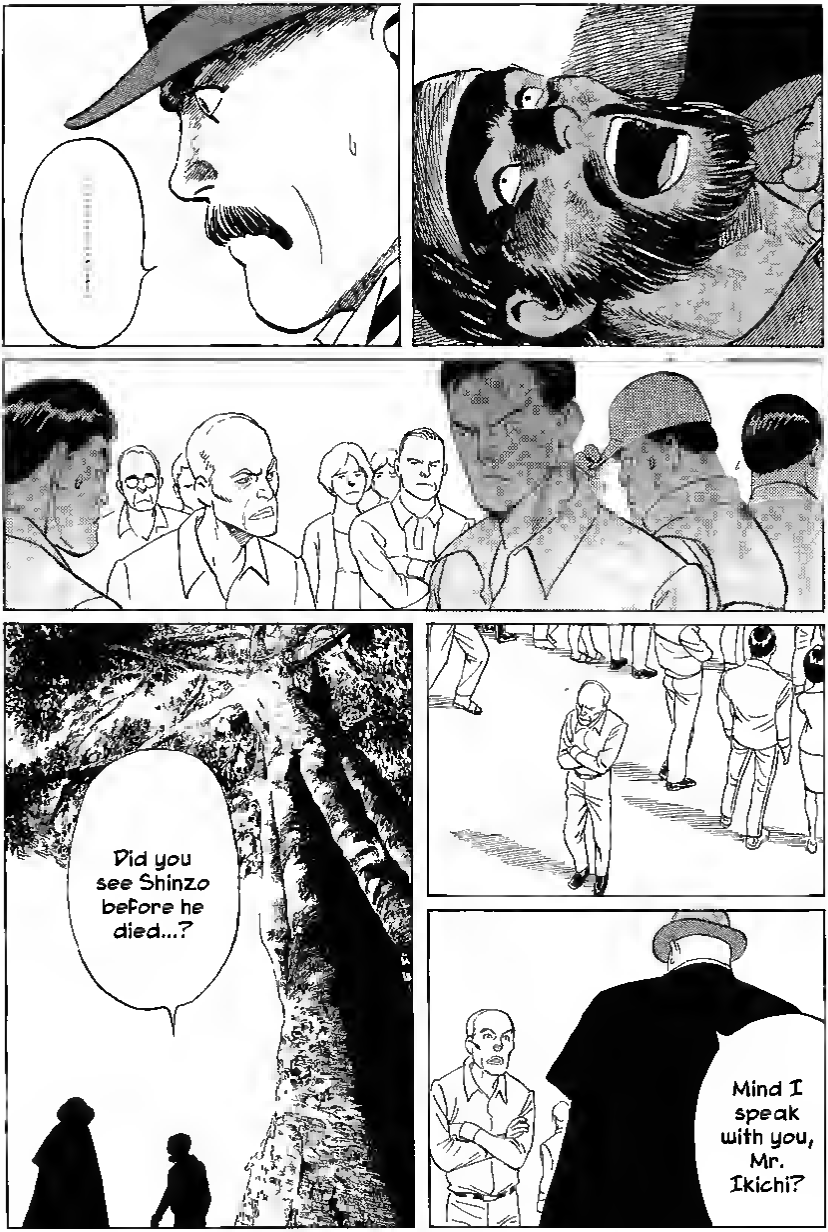

I'm starting to get a faint picture...
But I can't make a conclusion yet...
A Kyushuan Tree of Offering here, huh... But what are human bones doing under a tree of offering to the gods?
People want to keep history hidden, eh?

EEK...
EEEEE
EEK...
AIIEEEEE!
AIIEEEEE-
EEEEEE!

HELP!
H...
HELP...

WAAAAAAAuuuuuuuuuuGGGHHHH!!
GUE...
GAH!

She's still sleeping.
Where's Miss Ike?
Good. If we woke her up, she'd paint again.

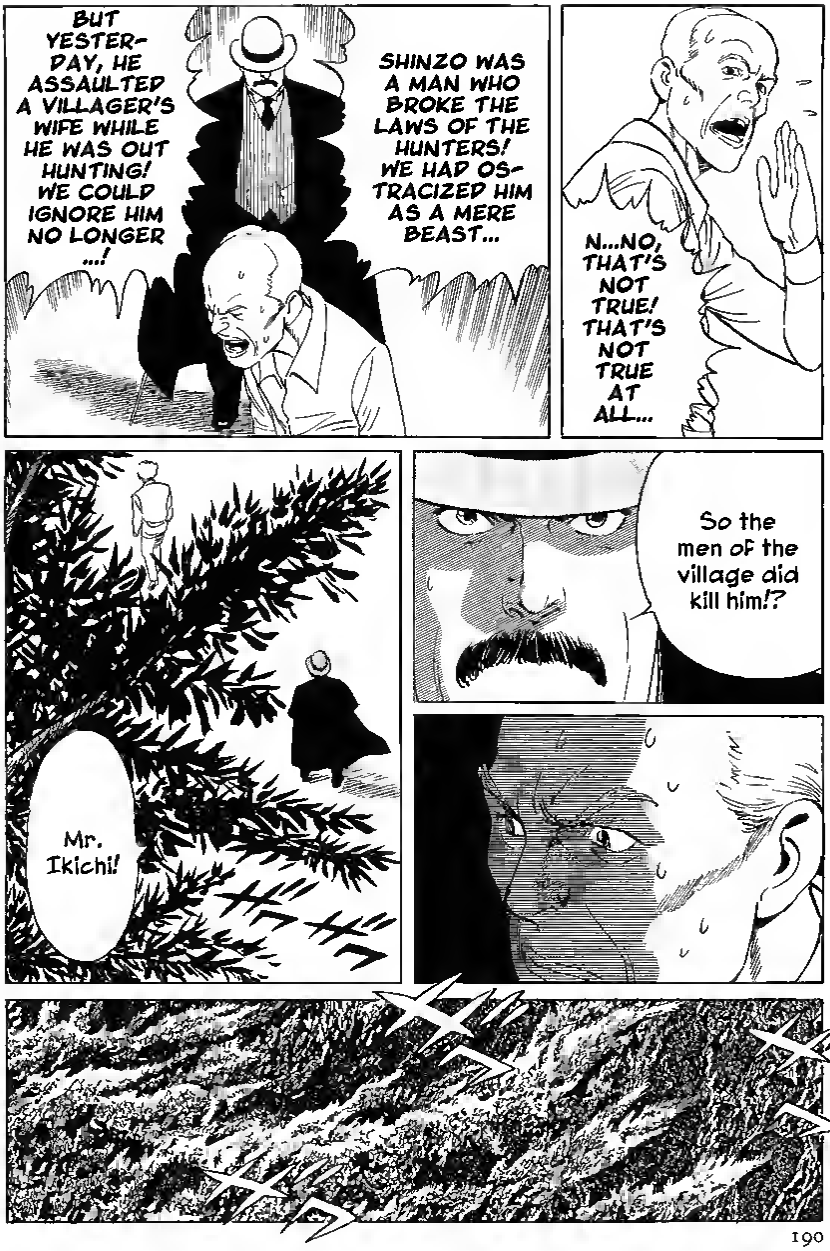

Did you see Shinzo before he died...?
Mind I speak with you, Mr. Ikichi?

You're a scholar, aren't you?
Want me to tell you the truth about the Boar's Head Ritual?
I went out for a walk ast evening, and he came up and talked to me.
Old Ikichi is hiding what he knows. I heard the truth from my grandpa when I was a kid...
The truth? ...Are you drunk?
Hehe... Oh, it's nothing. My blood starts boiling after I finish off a boar
The bones buried under the Tree of Offering are the Boar God Men.
The Boar God Men were eaten by the villagers...

When the Famine has gone to the point where the village has no other choice but starvation, they chose the Boar God Men, made them wear boars' heads...
and hunted them!

They used the same procedure as boar-hunting to deceive themselves...
THESE ARE NOT PEOPLE, THEY ARE BOARS! THAT IS WHAT THEY TOLD EACH OTHER AS THEY ATE THEM!

And after the famine passes, they dress as those Boar God Men and hold the Boar's Head Ritual as a requiem, correct?
It was so tragic, I had kept myself from thinking of it...
BUT WE'RE ALL THE DESCENDANTS OF BEASTS WHO HAVE FALLEN OFF THE HUMAN PATH! HEE-HAHAHA...
BUT NO MATTER HOW THEY TRY TO AVOID THE CURSE, A CANNIBAL IS STILL A CANNIBAL! HEHEHE...
THOSE DAMN VILLAGERS SEE ME AS A BEAST!
Did you kill him because he told me the secrets of this village ...?
Then he died that very night... I don't think that's a coincidence.


BUT YESTERDAY, HE ASSAULTED A VILLAGER'S WIFE WHILE HE WAS OUT HUNTING! WE COULD IGNORE HIM NO LONGER ...!
SHINZO WAS A MAN WHO BROKE THE LAWS OF THE HUNTERS! WE HAD OSTRACIZED HIM AS A MERE BEAST...
N...NO, THAT'S NOT TRUE! THAT'S NOT TRUE AT ALL...
So the men of the village did kill him!?
Mr. Ikichi!

Was it a homicide?
He has bruises all over his body. It doesn't look like he fell off a cliff...
Question all the villagers. There may have been more than one culprit.
I KILLED HIM!

I KILLED HIM, AND I ALONE !!
AAAAARRRGGGHHHHHHHH!
WAIT! DON'T SHOOT!
W... WAH HHH ...!?

Mr. Ikichi...

The Boar God Men were not selected against their will...
They offered themselves as sacrifices.
Shinzo must have been wrong ...
Huh?
Professor Munakata!
Or else... The elderly hunters must have always been ready to become the Boar God Men to save their village...

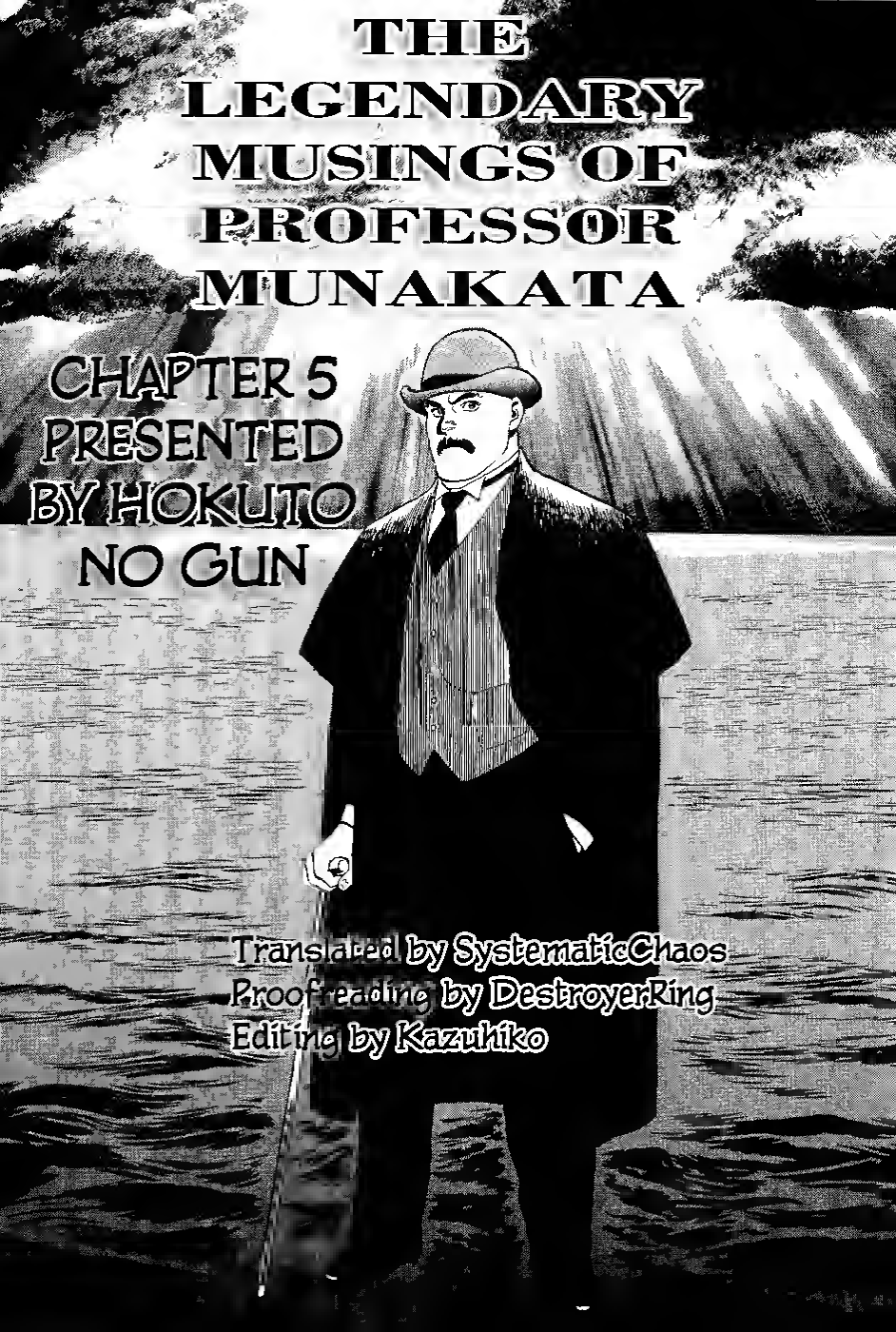
Well, we'd better get going...
Thanks for everything!
Well, I must conduct a funeral for Mr. Ikichi once they return his body, so I must be off..
So, did you find any boar-themed material to write about?
Are you going to be supervising me next year?
What is it?
Miss Ike...
Oh, come on! Then why'd we come all this way!?
There wasn't all that much, really. I'll just fake it with some harmless and inoffensive content.

Afterwards, they say that the rent portion of Inokashira Village's Tree of Offering began to rot, and it collapsed shortly thereafter...

THE LEGENDARY MUSINGS OF PROFESSOR MUNAKATA

CHAPTER 5

PRESENTED BY HOKUTO NO GUN

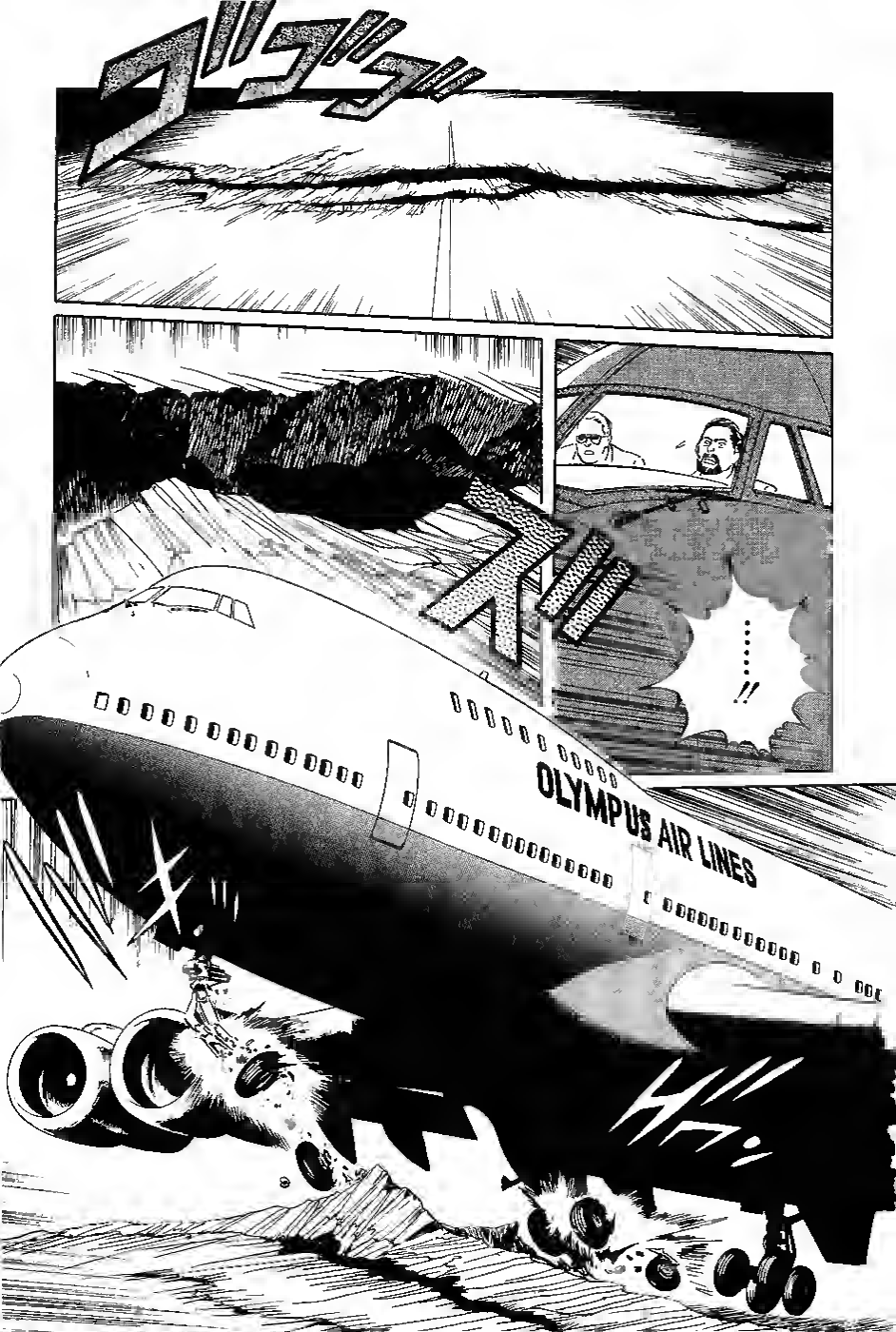


Translated by SystematicChaos
Proofreading by DestroyerRing
Editing by Kazuhiko

FILE 6:
LEGEND OF
THE DAIDARA
AIRLINES

New Tokyo International Airport, Kashima

E... EARTH-QUAKE!
THE OLYM-PUS JET IS ON THE RUN-WAY!
IT'S A BIG ONE! CANCEL THE TAKEOFF!
OLYMPUS AIR LINES


クルッ
ドドド

JUMBO JET FOR GREECE PLUNGES INTO THE SEA
FAULT IN THE RUNWAY, FAILED TAKEOFF 74 PASSENGERS INJURED

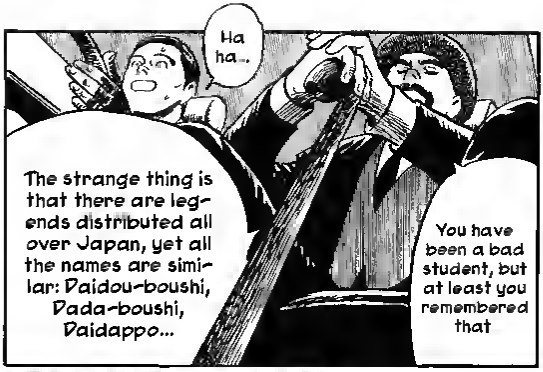
ACCORDING TO OUR MEASUREMENTS, THE CENTRAL PORTION ALONG THE FAULT APPEARS TO HAVE SUDDENLY COLLAPSED THE FAULT IS 170 METERS LONG, AND IN THE SHAPE OF AN ARC.
We don't know what caused it! There are no tectonic problems, but there are already over twenty fissures and subsidences...!
WHAT'S GOING ON HERE!? IT'S ONLY BEEN A SINGLE MONTH SINCE WE OPENED THE NEW INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT...
WHY DID THIS HAPPEN? WHAT CURSE HAS FALLEN ON US...?
.....

Look. Right in the middle of the concentric circles of fissures.
Was there anything buried at the center...?
Ah...
Pro-fessor !?
Wasn't that the location of Daita Village's Stone Circle!?
This is Professor Munakata of the East Asia University of Culture. He's my former teacher...
I...I'm sorry, but this location is for authorized personnel only...
Oh, it's you, Yoshimura! I never knew you were working here!
Ahh!

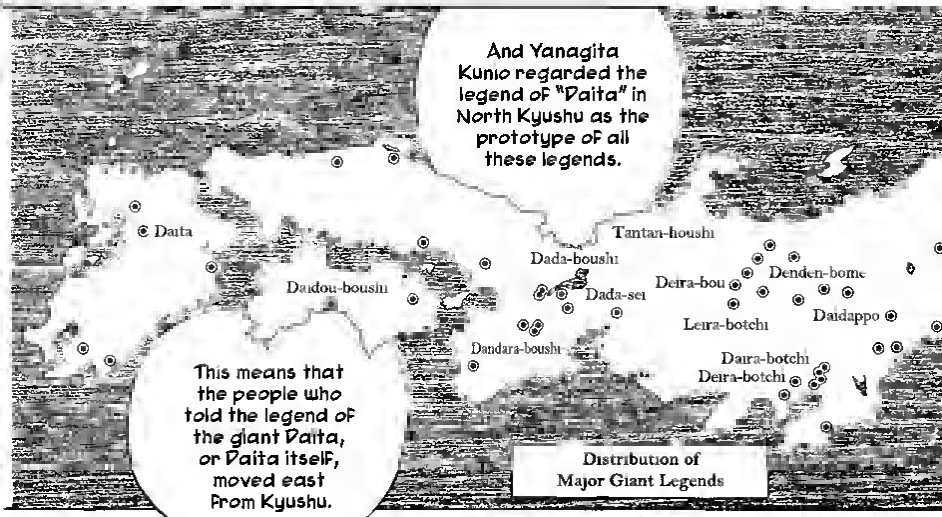
C...Come to think of it, wasn't there something like that before the airport construction...?
Yeah...
This is a picture of the former Daita Village, Professor...
It appeared to be a sacred location for the villagers... So naturally, they were opposed to the airport's construction..
Oh... It's just like Stonehenge in England. A megalithic structure like this is a rare sight in Japan.

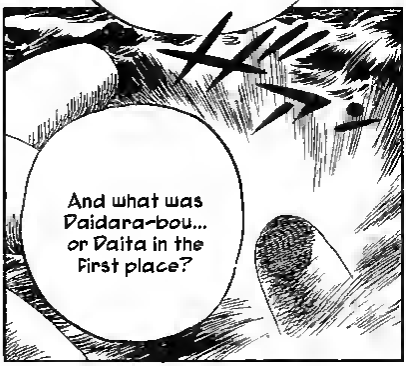
It wasn't just Daita Village. I'm sure you know how fiercely the locals resisted having their farmland taken away from them to construct Kashima Airport
So did the people of Daita Village take away the megaliths of the stone circle...?
So they are hidden in their new location, where we're headed to now...
Most likely... They were taken away the night before the compulsory seizure

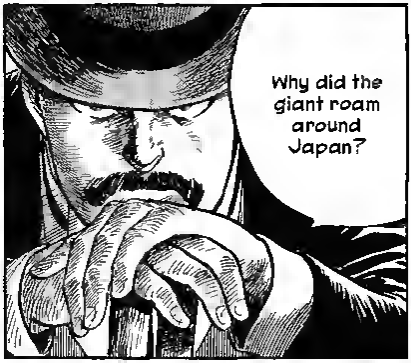
By the way, Professor, what were you doing in Boso?
I came here to see the burial mounds of Fudoki Hill, but it seems I was also drawn by the name of Daita.
Did you know? Some people say that the name "Daita", such as Daita Bridge in Tokyo, is associated with the legend of Daidara-bou.
Daidara-bou!?

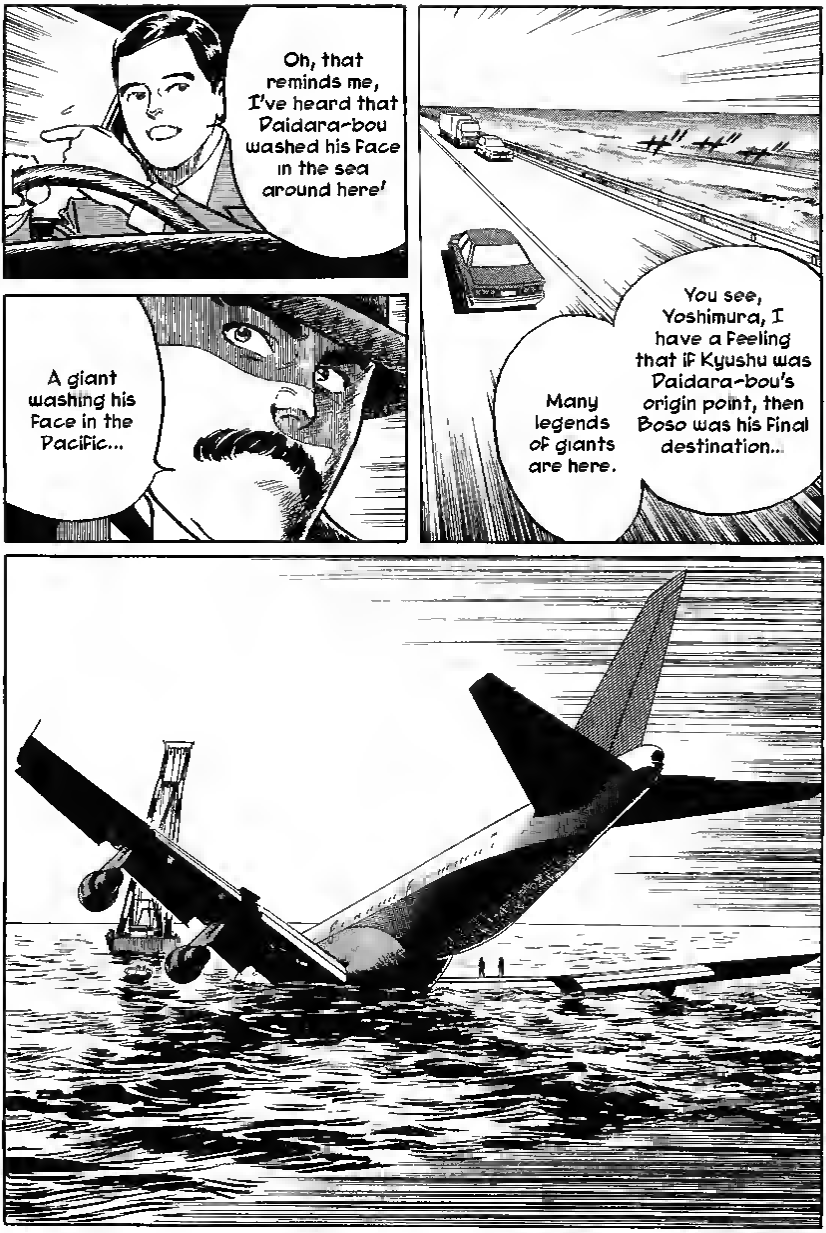

Ha ha...
The strange thing is that there are legends distributed all over Japan, yet all the names are similar: Daidou-boushi, Dada-boushi, Daidappo...
You have been a bad student, but at least you remembered that

That's the legend of an incredible giant! There are legends with grandiose episodes, like giant footprints, that still remain all over Japan...


And Yanagita Kunio regarded the legend of "Daita" in North Kyushu as the prototype of all these legends.
Daita
Daidou-boushi
Tantan-boushi
Dada-boushi
Dada-sei
Deira-bou
Denden-bome
Daidappo
Deira-botchi
Dandara-boushi
Daira-botchi
Deira-botchi
This means that the people who told the legend of the giant Daita, or Daita itself, moved east from Kyushu.
Distribution of Major Giant Legends


And what was Daidara-bou... or Daita in the first place?


Why did the giant roam around Japan?


Oh, that reminds me, I've heard that Daidara-bou washed his face in the sea around here!
A giant washing his face in the Pacific...
Many legends of giants are here.
You see, Yoshimura, I have a feeling that if Kyushu was Daidara-bou's origin point, then Boso was his final destination...

This is the new Daita Village... Phew...
The local residents secretly call it "Outsider Village"...
Out-sider Village ?

I'm Oh Kuro.
And what business does the airport corporation have here?
.....
You want to enshrine the megaliths?
Heh.
HAHA HAHA HAHA HAHA HA...
Well... We're offering to erect a shrine...
We don't want any rumors of a "curse" going around, so we want to do what we can as a corporation...

They tried to dismantle it during construction, but they had no choice but to leave it in place after a series of accidents...
I hear that they have the red Torii gate of Inari by the old Haneda Airport.
WE'VE LIVED IN DAITA FOR OVER A THOUSAND YEARS!
YOU CAN'T JUST GLOSS OVER THE FEELINGS OF THOSE YOU DROVE AWAY FROM THEIR LAND LIKE THAT!!
You think that spending a little money to abate a curse is a good deal!
Your methods are always the same.
The "hole" will only grow larger...
I'll bet you came here under orders from your superiors! Go back and tell them that the megaliths aren't what they think it is!

Then you'll see how it feels to have your land taken from you!
These are crane tracks... It seems have to been carrying something heavy...
ガヴァーガラ

AIII
EEEEE
EEEEE
EEEE!

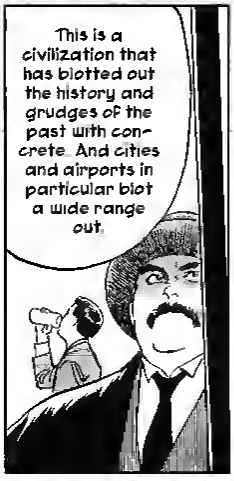
AIIIIIIII-
EEEEEE!
AIIIIIIII-
EEEEE
EEEEE!

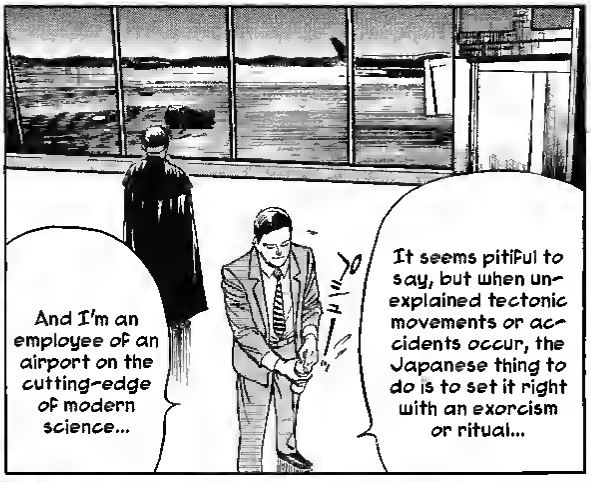
WHAT'S THE MATTER!? SNAP OUT OF IT!

Where is that which we must carry ...!?
What is our task ...?

This must have been the part buried underground. There's still mud... Hmm?
HEY!
ゴリ
ゴリ
ゴリ
ゴゴゴゴ

And this helical positioning...
This is exactly like the glyphs on the "Phaestos Disc" excavated on Crete!
H... Hieroglyphs?
What are ancient Aegean glyphs doing on the bottom of a megalith from Daita..!?
Hmm...
ATENA! WHERE IS HE!?
THERE HE IS, BROTHER!
P... PROFESSOR!
GET OUT OF HERE! LEAVE THIS VILLAGE AT ONCE!!


This is a civilization that has blotted out the history and grudges of the past with concrete. And cities and airports in particular blot a wide range out.

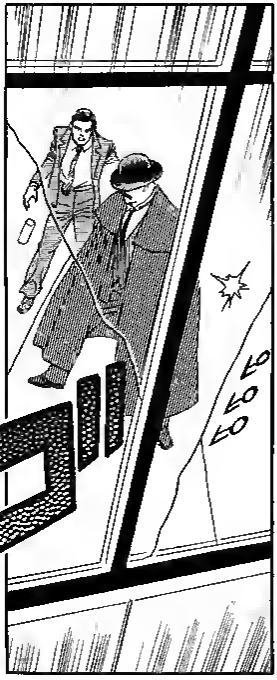

And I'm an employee of an airport on the cutting-edge of modern science...
It seems pitiful to say, but when unexplained tectonic movements or accidents occur, the Japanese thing to do is to set it right with an exorcism or ritual...

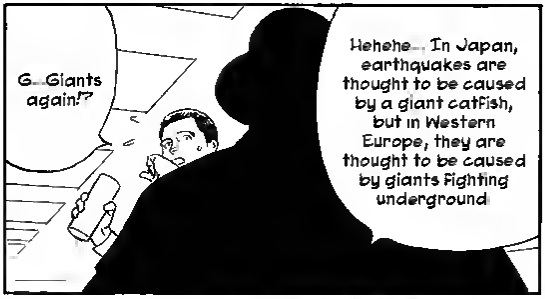
Oh, that's right. Boso had another amusing legend, didn't it?

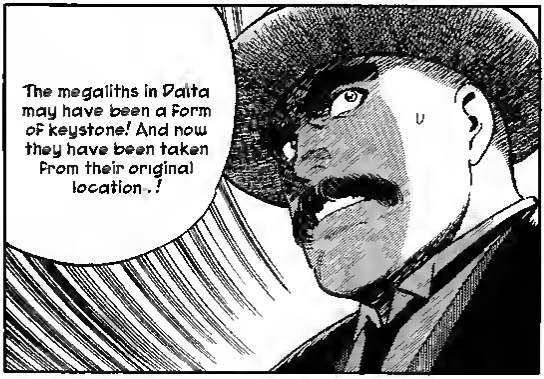
And sometimes, something breaks that thick shell and comes to the surface...

That's right. And that's why no major earthquakes happen in this region... But wait, one just did!
And he is still enshrined in the shrines of Kashima and Katori. No one knows how far underground they are.

It's the legend of the "Keystone", and says there is a giant catfish that causes earthquakes, but the great god of Kashima has its head pinned down with a megalith


GO
GO
GO


G...Giants again!?
Hehehe... In Japan, earthquakes are thought to be caused by a giant catfish, but in Western Europe, they are thought to be caused by giants fighting underground


The megaliths in Dalta may have been a form of keystone! And now they have been taken from their original location..!

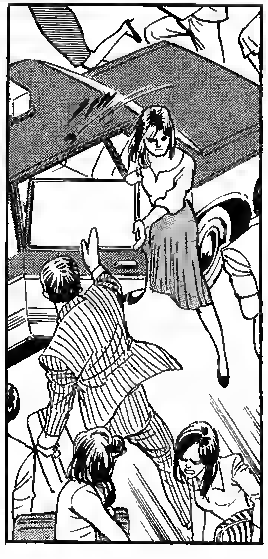
W... WAU- UGH!

OHHH!?
What is our task?

Where is that what we must carry!?
ズズズズ
ATENA! ATENA!?
THE HOLE IS GROWING DEEPER AND DEEPER....!
THEY'RE COMING! THEY'RE COMING OUT!!

ズズズ
ズズズ
T...THE REFUELING DC-10 IS GOING TO FALL IN!
G... GET AWAY FROM IT! HURRY!
CONTINENTAL
ズズズ

ドガ



YOU HAVE TO EVA-CUATE, PRO-FESSOR MUHA-KATA! HOW!
WAIT!

NEW Tokyo INTERNATIONAL
THIS IS AN EMERGENCY! ALL NON-PERSONNEL EVACUATE THE AIRCRAFT IMMEDIATELY!
THE SUBSIDENCE IS SPREADING! FIRE ENGINES, REMAIN ON STANDBY! MOVE ALL PARKED CRAFT! AND HURRY!

STOP RIGHT THERE! THE RUNWAY IS TOO DANGEROUS! TURN BACK!
That's that Atena girl from Daita Village! Where is she going...?
Pro-fessor !?

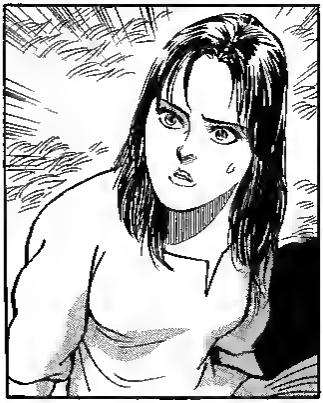
THEY ARE COMING! I MUST BE A SACRIFICE...!!
A SACRIFICE!?
WHAT ARE YOU DOING? WAIT!!
T...This isn't any ordinary subsidence... What is this hole!?
ズズズ
W... WAAA AAAAA UGH!

GOT IT, KURO!
FIND MY SISTER! SHE OUGHT TO BE HERE!

Do you really think you can stop them, Atena!?

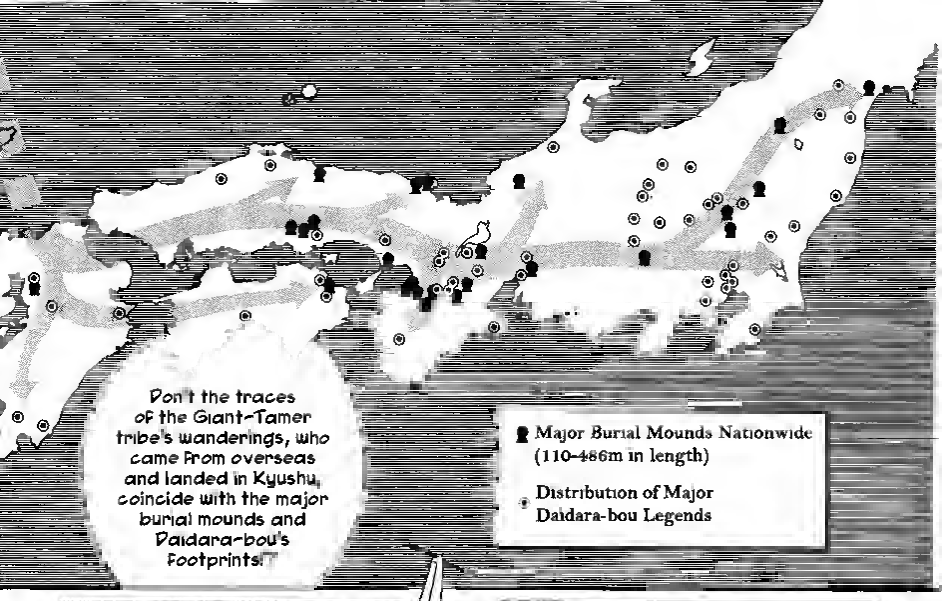
Would I be right in saying that the people of Daita Village are descended from the ancient Giant-Tamer tribe, Atena!?

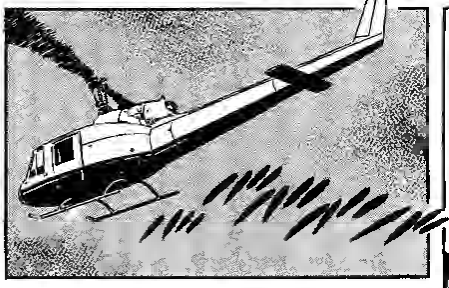
Giant-Tamer ...!?

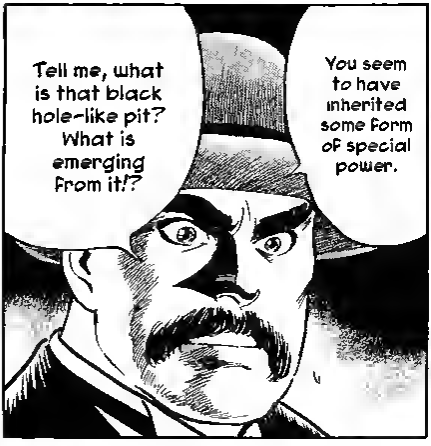


In this world, there are pyramids weighing a total of 6.5 million tons and thousands of statues weighing dozens of tons. Many megalithic ruins on a scale that is difficult to explain by human power alone, such as Easter Island, remain.
Legend has it that the over 50-ton megaliths of Stonehenge in England were carried by giants.
I believe that giants existed in ancient times...
They must have been low in intelligence, so they were controlled by people called Giant-Tamers, and used their power to work for the ruler of the time
Once their task was over, they were driven out of the clan along with the Giant-Tamer tribe...
Because a monument of authority built by giants could only be destroyed by giants!

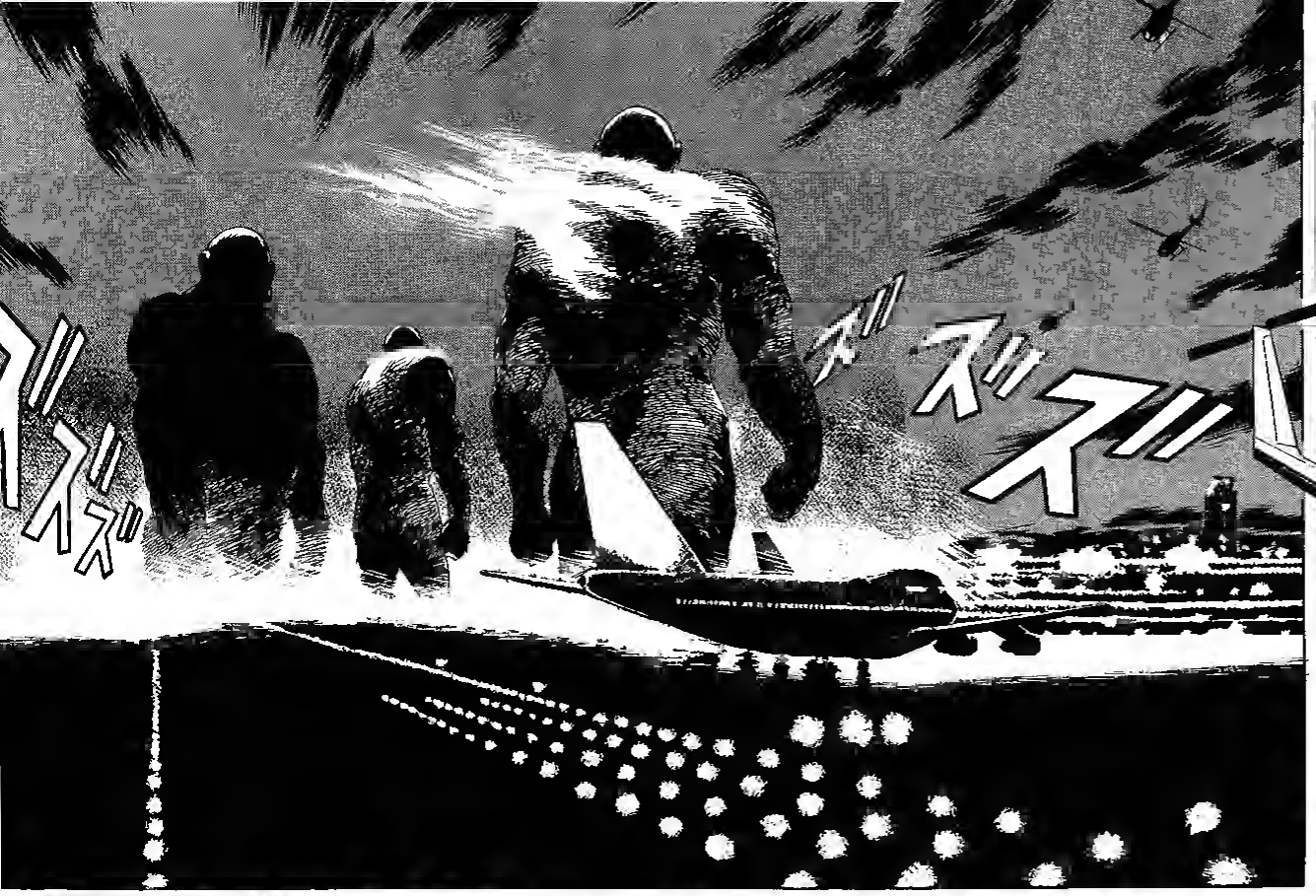
In Japan's case, the fourth and fifth centuries were the centuries of the giant burial mounds!
Y...You don't mean the giants and the Giant-Tamer tribe wandered the world and came to Japan!?
Could this have been possible by the hands of the Japanese alone?
In this age, giant burial mounds that would require millions of laborers working over a span of at least ten years, which would need massive amounts of earth and stone, were built in constant succession.
And the Nihon Shoki states that the Hashibaka Burial Mound in Nara was built by man by day, and by gods during the night.
The majority of the Daidara-bou legends are of the type where he carries a whole mountain, or digs a lake and makes a mountain with the soil


Don't the traces of the Giant-Tamer tribe's wanderings, who came from overseas and landed in Kyushu, coincide with the major burial mounds and Daidara-bou's footprints?
Major Burial Mounds Nationwide (110-486m in length)
Distribution of Major Daidara-bou Legends

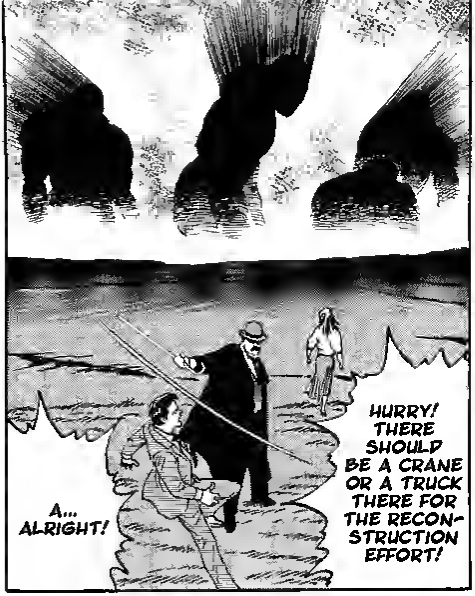


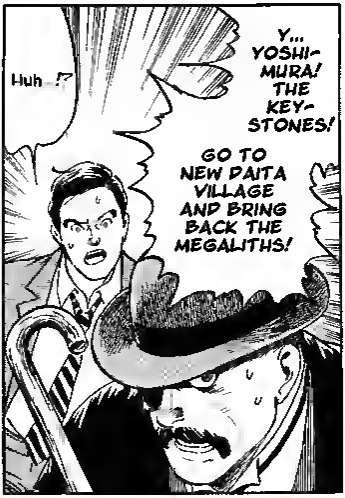

Tell me, what is that black hole-like pit? What is emerging from it!?
You seem to have inherited some form of special power.

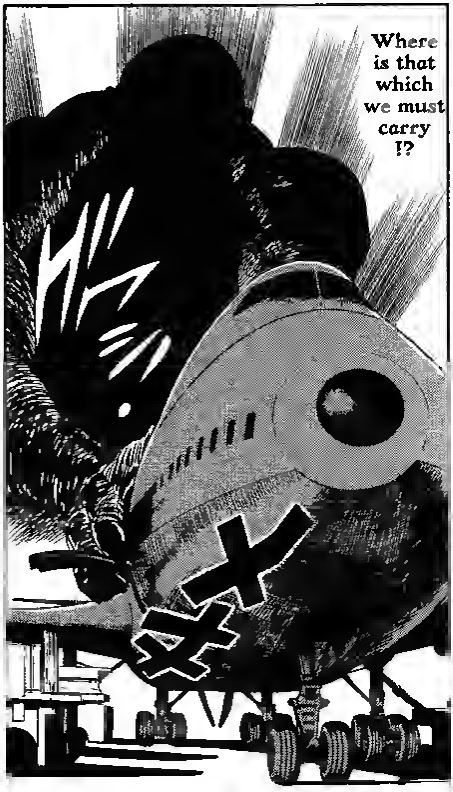
If only they had not built this airport in Narita, none of this would have happened! That is why we opposed it!!
...My ancestors arrived in Boso, and were finally able to settle in peace.


ズズズ
ズズズ

W... WHAT THE...!?
AHHH HHHH HHHH!


A... ALRIGHT!
HURRY! THERE SHOULD BE A CRANE OR A TRUCK THERE FOR THE RECONSTRUCTION EFFORT!


Huh !?
Y... YOSHIMURA! THE KEYSTONES!
GO TO NEW DAITA VILLAGE AND BRING BACK THE MEGALITHS!


Where is that which we must carry !?
ドン
メメメ

TO THINK THE GIANTS WERE STILL ALIVE...!

What is our task!?
S... STOP! STOP!

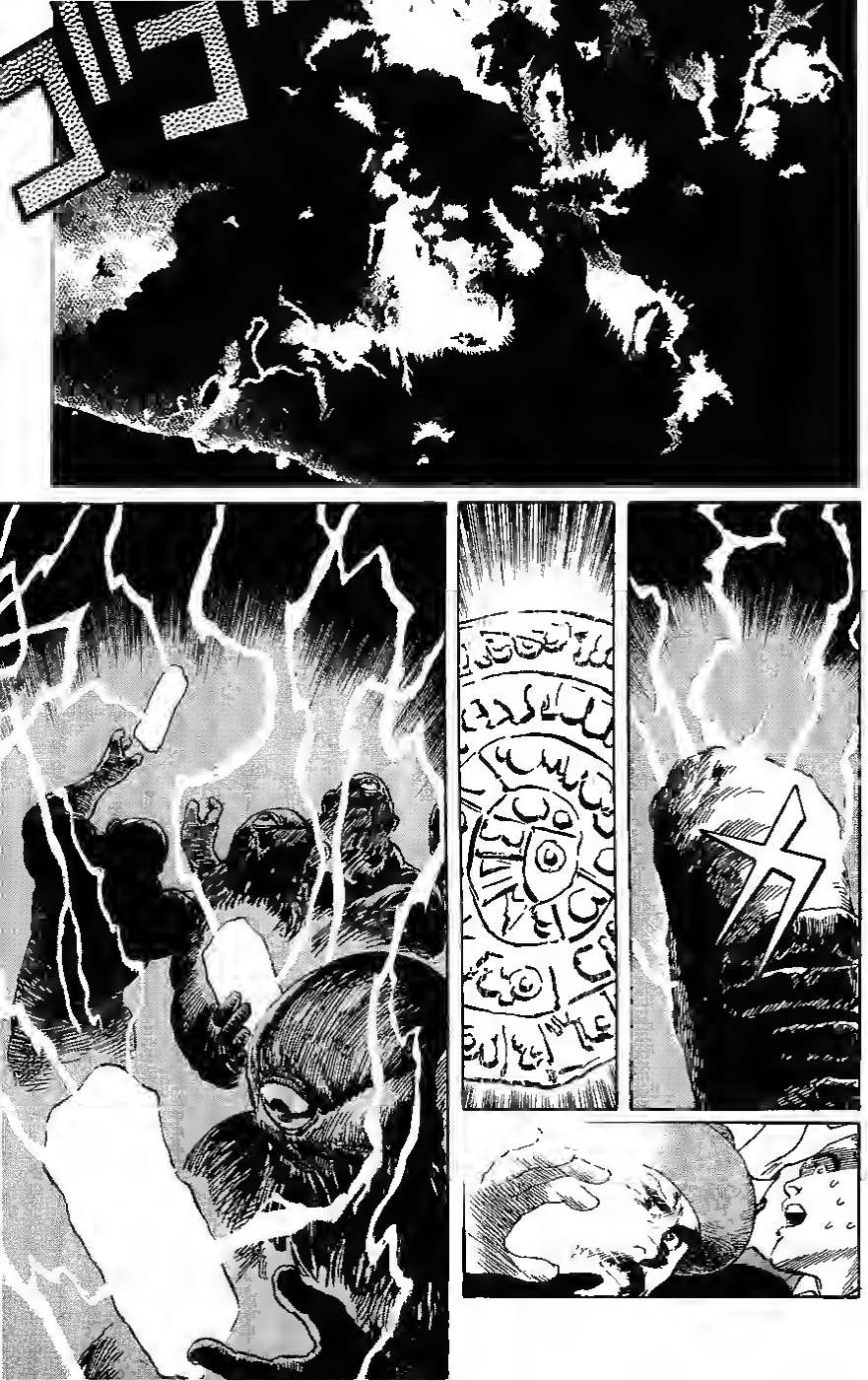
R...REQUESTING SELF-DEFENSE FORCE DEPLOYMENT... PLEASE, HURRY!!
HA!!O!
WAAAA AAAAA UUUUU UGHHH!

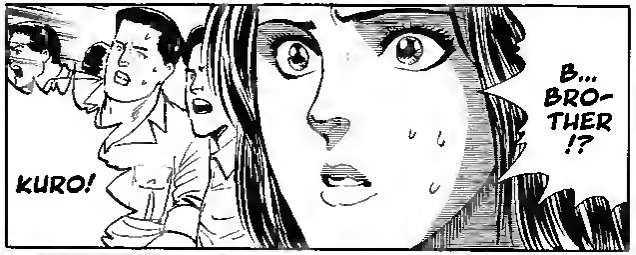
TITANS!
T... Titans!?
YOU MEAN THE RACE OF GIANTS IN GREEK MYTH THAT EXISTED BEFORE THE BIRTH OF MAN-KIND!?
KHH!
IS THAT DAIDARA-BOU... OR DAITA!?

TAR-TARUS!
But the myths say they were defeated by Zeus and the Olympian gods, and were deposed to Tartarus, the hell beneath the Earth...
But the proper method to call up the Titans and send them back to Tartarus has been long-forgotten, even by our tribe...
The maw to Tartarus can open anywhere.
Brother!
WE TOOK AWAY THE MEGALITHS SO THIS WOULD HAPPEN. BEHOLD! NOW IT IS TIME FOR THE PEOPLE WHO TRAMPLED US UNDERFOOT TO BE TRAMPLED THEMSELVES! HAHAHAHAHA...
DO NOT SEND THEM BACK! LET THEM WREAK HAVOC, ATENA!

THE MAW TO TARTARUS IS GROWING WIDER, BROTHER! WE HAVE TO DO STOP IT BEFORE ANY MORE TITANS ARISE!
Where is that which we must carry!?
I'M THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN UNDER-STAND THE TITANS, SO I WILL...
NO, YOU IDIOT! SACRI-FICES ARE JUST OUR CLAN'S SUPER-STITION!
PRO-FESSOR!
OHHH!
I HAVE THE MEGA-LITHS!

AND HURRY !!
THAT IS WHAT THE TITANS ARE TO CARRY! ATENA, ORDER THE TITANS TO CARRY THE MEGALITHS TO TARTARUS!!
THE STO- NES !!
N...NO! YOUR TASK IS TO DESTROY THE AIRPORT! WAIT!

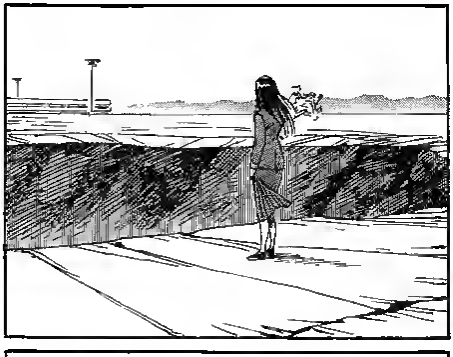


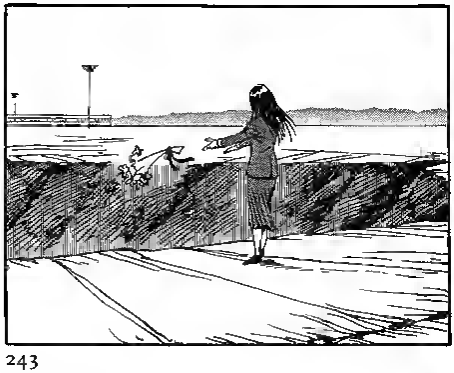

KURO!
B... BRO-THER !?

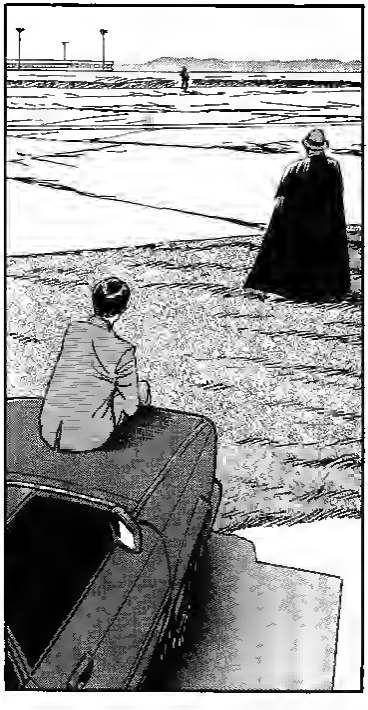
THAT'S THE LIGHTNING OF THE GODS, SEALING THE TITANS IN TARTARUS!

BROTHER! NO! I'LL...
They do need a sacrifice, Atena...
The Titans eat humans... And they will not truly subside if they do not.
I will take with me...
the history of the tribe that wandered the world from distant Greece...
BROTHER!

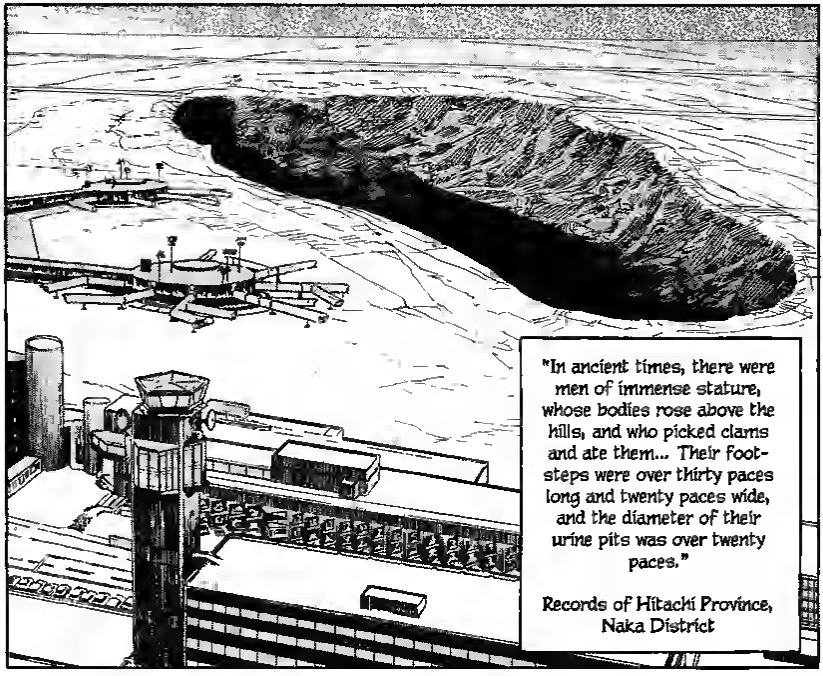
Well, I guess Kashima International Airport is going to be closed indefinitely, and I'll be out of a job. Sigh...







The history of the tribe that wandered the world from distant Greece...


"In ancient times, there were men of immense stature, whose bodies rose above the hills, and who picked clams and ate them... Their footsteps were over thirty paces long and twenty paces wide, and the diameter of their urine pits was over twenty paces."
Records of Hitachi Province, Naka District

❖おことわり❖

この作品はフィクションです。
実在の人物・団体・事件などには一切関係ありません。
また、雑誌掲載時の時代を背景に描かれていますので、
現在の国名、単位表記と異なる表現がありますが、
あえてそのままとしました。ご了承ください。

❖初出単行本❖

一九九六年五月三〇日　小社より刊行

解説

伝奇SF職人の技を堪能

とり・みき
漫画家

柄にもなく緊張しまくっている。

あの星野之宣さんの解説を、はたしてこの僕あたりが書いてもいいものかどうか、締切日をとうに過ぎたこの段になっても、まだあまりに畏れ多くて逡巡しているのだ。いや、たんに星野作品の凄さを語るだけだったら、いくら先輩作家であろうとこんなに萎縮はしない。問題は僕もまた、ときどきこの『宗像教授伝奇考』のような伝奇物を描いたりするマンガ家である、ということなのだ。意識しようとしまいと、マンガ家が他のマンガ作品を語るということは、結果的に自分のマンガについて語ることにもなってしまう。そう考えて、あらためて星野作品と自分の作品を比較すると……僕が畏れおののく理由もわかっていただけるのではないかと思う。

まあそもそも、比較云々というのがずいぶんと失礼な話であり、80年代以降、伝奇マンガを描いていて、諸星大二郎と星野之宣という二大スター（まさに）の影響を受けていな

い者などいるはずはないのである。

僕もまったくその口で、自分ではけっこう気をつけているつもりでも、お二人の影響というのは作品のあちらこちらに出てしまっている。なにしろ伝奇SFマンガというものを本格的に始めたのは諸星さんであり、ジャンルとして定着させたのは星野さんなのだから。

現在、いわゆる伝奇的な枠組みや小道具を使っているマンガは、少女マンガにも、ちょっとマニア向けの青年誌にも、数多く連載されている。まったく、似たようなネタの奪い合いはよしましょうよ、パイは小さいんだから、というような感じだが、しかし、それらのマンガとお二人の作品を比べてみると、どうも根本的に作り方が違っているような気がしてならない。先に「影響を受けていない者などいない」と書いたし、それはまったくその通りなのだが、諸星・星野のような方法論で伝奇マンガを描いている人は意外と少ないのだ。

現在の伝奇マンガの多くは基本的にキャラクター・マンガであり、キャラの格好良さやロマンスやバトルやバイオレンスやスペクタクルがメインで、伝奇的材料はある種の意匠として使われているケースが多い。誤解のないように言っておくと、それが悪いというのではない。そういうマンガもまたアリである。というか、おそらくそういう作品のほうが常にマンガのメイン・ストリームであったし、獲得できる読者の数も多いと思う。

これに比べてお二人の作品は、なんだかんだいっても基本となる伝奇的なアイデアこそ

が、作品の第一の魅力となっている。そこはもちろんお二人ともプロであり、とくに星野さんは変速技に逃げない正攻法の演出をなさる方なので、魅力的なキャラも出てくれば、練ったドラマも派手なスペクタクルもちゃんと用意されているのだが、それらは伝奇的アイデアを、どれだけうざったくなくエンタテインメントとして読者に伝えるか、というテクニックとして使われることが多いような気がする。もちろんそれだけではない。それだけでない部分は後述するが、基本的に奉仕のベクトルが前者の作品群とは逆なのだ。

そう、まさに星野之宣は画力においても、ストーリー作りにおいても、テクニックの人である。話がややこしくなる危険性があるので、絵についてはひとまず置いておいて、以下は画力ではなくストーリー作りや構成力や演出の技法という意味に限って「テクニック」という言葉を使う。

僕は先程から最大級の賛辞と憧れと羨ましさでもってこの言葉を使っているのだが、実は日本のストーリーマンガにおいて（映画でも小説でもそうかもしれない）テクニックというのはあまり重視されていない。とくに週刊連載のマンガの場合は、そのときどきのエモーションやパッションのほうが重要であり、キャラ立ちこそが優先さるべき事項となる。行き当たりばったりでも派手な展開のほうが歓迎され、構成とか伏線とか辻褄（つじつま）とかは、まあどうでもよかったりするのだ。

こうして作品としてのトータリティはそっちのけでやたら巻数の長いマンガばかり増え

てしまっているのだが、逆に気の利いた巧い短編を描く人や場所は少なくなってしまった。たまにあってもなんとなく雰囲気で読ませる作品のほうが多いのだ。

だから『宗像教授伝奇考』のような連作短編を読むと、あらためて星野之宣の手堅い作話術と構成力、そして正攻法の、しかし細やかな演出力に驚いてしまうのだ（つけ加えると、諸星大二郎も、あの独特な絵でつい感覚的・生理的な部分ばかりクローズアップされがちだが、実は細かいモンタージュを多用するなど、先程から言っている意味でのテクニックの人である）。

それにしても、隔月ペースとはいえ、毎回このレベルの完結した短編を仕上げてくるのは尋常ではない。星野之宣は長編作家のイメージが強いが、よく考えるとあの『ヤマタイカ』でも文庫で五巻、長編といってもそれほどむやみに巻数の多い作品はない。物語をきっちり作ってちゃんと終わらせる人なのだ。

とはいえ、連載マンガであるから、そこはやはり物語の推進役として、強烈なキャラクターというのが必要になる。

異端の考古学教授・稗田礼次郎が黒服・長髪で名前は稗田阿礼からとっているのに対抗してか、異端の民俗学教授・宗像伝奇（たたくす）もまた夏でも黒の外套、しかし頭は対照的にスキンヘッドで、名前は南方熊楠からとっている、という具合に、諸星さんへのライバル意識がかいま見えるのが面白い。もっともお二人はご友人であるから半分はシャレも入っている

のだろう。連作短編ということでは他の追随を許さない手塚治虫の『ブラック・ジャック』をもちょこっと彷彿させるキャラクターだ。

伝奇SFでは、実在する遺跡や伝承を材料に使って、そこからどれだけ飛躍した、しかしホントかもしれないと思える物語を作れるかが腕の見せ所となる。この飛躍のしかたというのが実に微妙な帯域のもので、飛躍が過ぎてもたちまち嘘臭いトンデモな話に堕してしまうし、といって現実や資料や取材にとらわれすぎると、出来の悪い論文発表のようなつまらない話になってしまう。

加えて、ネタになりそうなおいしい題材というのは実はそう多くはなく、小説も含めれば、たいていのそういう材料には既に唾がつけられ、使われてしまっている。僕なども、なにか思いつくとそれは既に諸星さんや星野さんが、小説では小松左京さんや半村良さんや荒俣宏さんが書いてしまっていることに気づき、何度も頭を抱え込んだものである。

だが、あまりにオリジナリティーにこだわると何にも描き出せなくなってしまう。というか過度なオリジナル信仰は、描き手にとっても思い上がった考え方だ。ある時期から僕はこう開き直るようにした。

伝奇物においては実はみんな同じ物語を描いて（書いて）いるのだ、と。

言いわけめいた自己弁護のための方便に聞こえるかもしれない。だが、そもそも伝奇物というのはそういうことなのである。

正史に残らない葬り去られた闇の側の民の物語。人は昔から口伝、神楽、説話集、能、歌舞伎、読本、小説、映画、マンガと、媒体の形は変われども、そうした人々の魂をモノ語りの中で現世に引き戻し、話を聞いて供養してきたわけで、その根本の内容や構造はずっと同じなのだと。

実際、同じ伝説や人物に材を取った芸能や古典は、調べてみるといくらもある。近年の作品に限っても、いったいどれだけのヤマトタケル物、安倍晴明物、新しくは忠臣蔵物や新撰組物があることか。逆に言うと、死者の魂がそのときどきの作家の口や手を借り語らしめているのが伝奇物なのだ。

だから僕は、90年代後半に描きだした自分の長編に関して、ある雑誌のインタビューで次のようなことを言った。

「同じ話ですよ。同じ話を描いているんです。70年代末に諸星さんの『暗黒神話』があって80年代末に星野さんの『ヤマタイカ』があった。だったら90年代末にも同じ構造のマンガがあっていいんじゃないか。そう思って描きだしたんです」

不遜にも天才二人の名前を持ち出したバチがあたって、この作品が載っていた雑誌は休刊、連載も現在休止中という憂き目にあうのだが、それはともかく、大事なのは同じ話を「どう見せるか」「なにがつけ加えられるか」ということなのだと思う。そこに作家のオリジナリティーが現れる。同じ伝説を扱い、似たような材料が出てきても、その人独自の

視点があれば、新しい作品は作れるのだ。それはまさにさっきの「テクニック」という問題とも繋がる。

話を『宗像教授伝奇考』に戻せば、この分量でよくも毎回これだけ大がかりなスペクタクルを盛り込めるなあ、と感心してしまう。ここでやっと絵の問題に触れるけれども（もうだいぶ筆がのってきたので懲りずに失礼な書き方をしてしまうと）、在る物を誰の目にもその物として伝えることの出来る星野さんのケレンのない誠実でシャープな筆致は、逆にあり得ない怪物だの現象だのを描くときにマイナスに働くのではないか、と画力のない僕などは思ってしまう。なにしろゴマカシのきかない線だから。

これが諸星さんのあの不安定な線なら、日常描写（それ自体がもう現実感が揺らぐような絵である）の次に得体の知れない怪物が突然描かれていても、読者は違和感なく受け入れるのだが、星野さんの具体的な線でこれをやるには相当なパワーが要るはずである。にもかかわらず、星野さんは毎回逃げずに正面からそれを見せてくれるのだ。この力技はただごとではない。真の意味でのプロフェッショナルでありエンタテイナーだと思う。

最後に保留しておいた「それだけではない」件について述べておこう。先にアイデア至上主義のパズラーみたいに思われかねないことを書いたが、もちろんそれは本意ではない。伝奇的な題材を意匠として利用するのではなく、正面からテーマにするということは、つまりそれらの仕掛けや風習を作った古の人々の心に真摯に触れることでもある。宗像教

授が掘り起こす遺跡や伝承には、闇に葬り去られた人々の念が込められており、それに関わる現代の人々の業もまた、この作品では必ずパラレルに描かれている。宗像自身もそういう業を背負った人間の一人だ。言葉にすると安っぽいが、つまり根木は人間ドラマであるということだ。

斬新な伝奇的アイデアと、そこに有機的に織り込められる人間のドラマ、そして大スペクタクル。これらが平均して三十数枚の短編の中に毎回凝縮されている……。手塚治虫の頃のカリカチュアされた絵なら可能だったことだが、絵の密度にしても物語のディテールにしても、飛躍的に情報量が増えた現在のマンガでこれをやるのは並大抵のことではない。まったく、ページあたり倍くらいの値段を読者は払っても惜しくない、と僕は思います。

時代と世代を越えて、いつも新鮮な名作群!!

〈潮漫画文庫〉絶賛発売中!!

❖星野之宣❖

［ヤマタイカ］全5巻

❖横山光輝❖

［三国志］全30巻
［項羽と劉邦］全12巻
［水滸伝］全6巻

❖手塚治虫❖

［ブッダ］全12巻
［ルードウイッヒ・B］全2巻

❖諸星大二郎❖

［無面目・太公望伝］全1巻

❖いしいひさいち❖

［鏡の国の戦争］全1巻

❖山岸涼子❖

［ツタンカーメン］全3巻
［鬼］全1巻
［イシス］全1巻

❖坂田靖子❖

［坂田靖子セレクション］全17巻

❖たがみよしひさ❖

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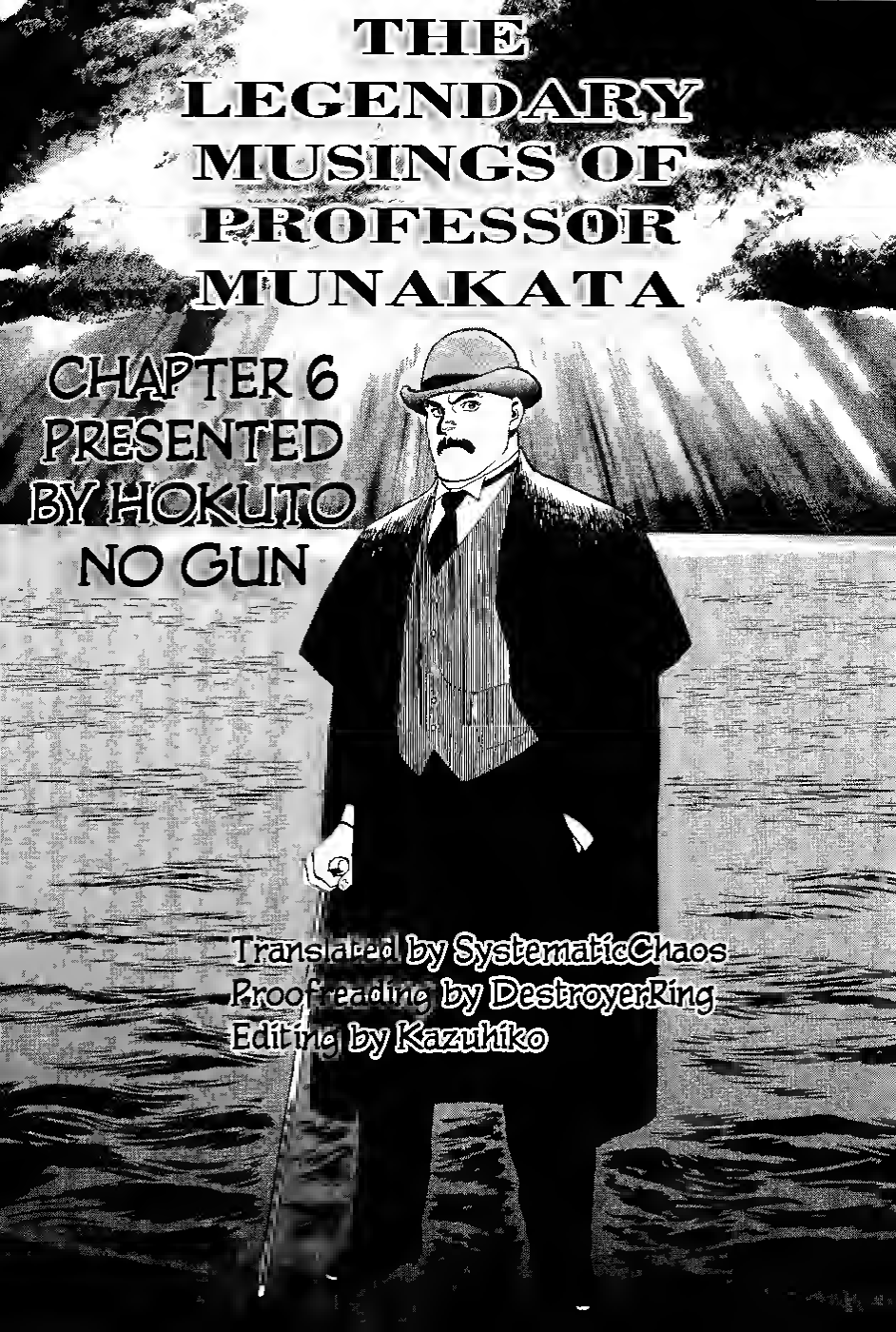
THE LEGENDARY MUSINGS OF PROFESSOR MUNAKATA

CHAPTER 6

PRESENTED BY HOKUTO NO GUN



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